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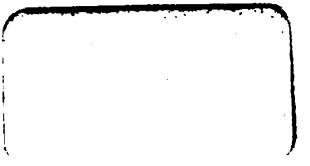
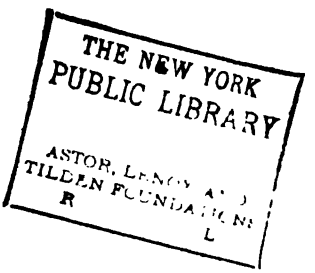


MY LIFE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From a photograph taken in 1894

Josiah Wedgwood.

BY

JOSIAH FLYNT

Author of "Tramping with Tramps," "Notes of an Itinerant Cop," etc.

With an Introduction by ARTHUR SYMONS

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
THE CUTTING PUBLISHING COMPANY
MCMVII

MY LIFE

BY

JOSIAH FLYNT [pseud.]

Author of "Tramping with Tramps," "The World of Graft," Etc.

[Josiah Flynt Willard]

With an Introduction by ARTHUR SYMONS

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to all those human beings, who, like myself, have come under the spell of that will-o'-the-wisp, *Die Ferne,* the disappearing and fading Beyond, and who, like myself again, are doomed sooner or later to see the folly of their quest, *Die Ferne* receding meanwhile farther and farther away from their vision. "It is the way of the World," says the Philosopher. That my fellow dupes in the fruitless chase may all become sweet-natured philosophers in the end, is my earnest wish and prayer.

Johnson 23 Nov. 1935

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INTRODUCTION

I

IT seems a long time since the day when Josiah Flynt came to me in the Temple, with a letter of introduction from his sister, whom I had met at the house of friends in London. The contrast was startling. I saw a little, thin, white, shriveled creature, with determined eyes and tight lips, taciturn and self-composed, quietly restless; he was eying me critically, as I thought, out of a face prepared for disguises, yet with a strangely personal life looking out, ambiguously enough, from underneath. He spoke a hybrid speech; he was not interested apparently in anything that interested me. I had never met any one of the sort before, but I found myself almost instantly accepting him as one of the people who were to mean something to me. There are those people in life, and the others; the others do not matter.

The people who knew me wondered, I think, at my liking Flynt; his friends, I doubt not, wondered that he could get on with me. With all our superficial unlikeness, something within us insisted on our being comrades. We found out the points at which undercurrents in us

flowed together. Where I had dipped, he had plunged, and that aim, which I was expressing about then, to " roam in the sun and air with vagabonds, to haunt the strange corners of cities, to know all the useless, and improper, and amusing people who are alone very much worth knowing," had been achieved by him. I was ready for just such a companion, hesitating on the edge of a road which he had traveled.

We went together, not only about London, but on little journeys to France and Belgium, and on a longer visit to Germany. All that was ceaselessly entertaining to me, and came as a sort of margin to the not more serious enterprises of " The Savoy," the days of Beardsley, Conder, and Dowson. Flynt never quite fitted into that group, but he watched it with curiosity, as part of the material for his study of life.

I have been reading over his kindly and playful sayings about me in this book, which are veracious enough in the main substance of them, and it hurts me to think that I shall never go round to the Crown with him any more, or sit with him again in a café in Berlin. It was there, at the Embergshalle, that I found a poem of mine which is called " Emmy," but it was not for the sake of " material," or for those " impressions and sensations " of which he speaks, that I went about with him, but for the sake of the things themselves; and I wondered if he realized it. So what pleases me most now is when he says that he never thought of my books, or of myself as a literary man, when we were together. It was because he was so much more, in his way, than a

literary man, that I cared for him so much, and it was of things more intimate than books that I liked to talk with him.

His ideas were always his own, and seemed to most people to be eccentric. He had come to them by way of his own experience, or by deduction from the experience of others whom he had learned to know from inside. His mind was stubborn; you saw it in his dogged face, in which the thin lips were pressed tightly together and the eyes fixed level. He was rarely turned out of his ground by an argument, for he avoided debating about things that he did not know. I never saw him conscious of the beauty of anything; I do not think he read much, or cared for books. His talk was generally cynical, and he believed in few people and few opinions.

Flynt had no sense of style, and when he began to try to write down what he had seen and what he thought of it, the first result was at once tedious and formal, the life all gone out of what had so literally been lived. I was a fierce critic, and drove and worried him to be natural in his writing, to write as he would talk, in a dry, curt, often ironical way. His danger in writing was to be too literal for art and not quite literal enough for science. He was too completely absorbed in people and things to be able ever to get aloof from them; and to write well of what one has done and seen one must be able to get aloof from oneself and from others. If ever a man loved wandering for its own sake it was George Borrow; but George Borrow had a serious and whimsical brain always at work, twisting the things that he saw into

shapes that pleased him more than the shapes of the things in themselves. I tried to get Flynt to read Borrow, but books were of little use to him. He did finally succeed in saying more or less straightforwardly what he wanted to say, but his work will remain a human document, of value in itself, behind which one can divine only a part of the whole man. There was far more in his mind, his sensations were far subtler, his curiosity was more odd and rare, than any one who did not know him will ever recognize from his writing. His life was a marvelous invention: he created it in action, and the words in which he put it down are only a kind of commentary, or footnote to it.

Human curiosity: that made up the main part of Flynt's nature; and with it went the desire to find out everything by trying it, not merely by observing. None of the great wanderers of letters, Borrow or Stevenson, was so really a born vagabond; none had so little in the way of second thoughts behind him on his way through the world. The spectacle, the material, all that was so much to these artists, was to him only so much negligible quantity, an outer covering which he had to get through. He went to see Tolstoy in Russia, and was taken into his house, and digged in his garden. He went to see Ibsen at Munich. To neither did he go for anything but that for which he went to the tramps and convicts: to find out what sort of human beings they were at close quarters.

Whatever he has written of value has been the record of personal experience, and after several books in which

there is much serious instruction as well as external fact and adventure, he ended with this candid story of himself, of what he knew about himself, and of that larger part which he did not understand, except that it led him where he had to go. The narrative breaks off before he had time to end it, with what was really the comedy of his life: the vagabond, ending by becoming so fantastically useful a member of society; the law, which he had defied, clever enough to annex him; he himself, clever enough to take wages for doing over again what he had done once for nothing, at its expense. Was it a way of "ranging" himself a little, and would he, if things had gone well, have answered the question, which I was fond of asking: What would remain for him in the world when he had tramped over all the roads of it? As it happened, he got short benefit from the change of position. He made more money than was good for him, out of detective service, first for the railroads, then for the police, and what had been one of the temptations of his life was easier, indeed seemed to him now necessary, to be succumbed to. He had an inherited tendency to drink, which had been partly kept down; now this new contact, so perilous for him, reawakened and strengthened the tendency into permanence. Gradually things slipped through his hands; the demand for books, articles, lectures, increased, as his power of complying with that demand ebbed out of him. He had friends, who held by him as long as he would let them. One of them was the only woman whom he had ever seriously cared for, besides his mother and his sisters. For three years

he was rarely sober, and drink killed him. At the end he shut himself away in his room at the hotel in Chicago, as Dowson shut himself away in his lodgings in Featherstone Buildings, and Lionel Johnson in his rooms in Gray's Inn; as a sick animal goes off into a lonely corner in the woods to die in.

II

Josiah Flynt was never quite at home under a roof or in the company of ordinary people, where he seemed always like one caught and detained unwillingly. An American, who had studied in a German university, brought up, during his early life, in Berlin, he always had a fixed distaste for the interests of those about him, and an instinctive passion for whatever exists outside the border-line which shuts us in upon respectability. There is a good deal of affectation in the literary revolt against respectability, together with a child's desire to shock its elders, and snatch a lurid reputation from those whom it professes to despise. My friend never had any of this affectation; life was not a masquerade to him, and his disguises were the most serious part of his life. The simple fact is, that respectability, the normal existence of normal people, did not interest him; he could not even tell you why, without searching consciously for reasons; he was born with the soul of a vagabond, into a family of gentle, exquisitely refined people: he was born so, that

is all. Human curiosity, which in most of us is subordinate to some more definite purpose, existed in him for its own sake; it was his inner life, he had no other; his form of self-development, his form of culture. It seems to me that this man, who had seen so much of humanity, who had seen humanity so closely, where it has least temptation to be anything but itself, really achieved culture, almost perfect of its kind, though the kind were of his own invention. He was not an artist, who can create; he was not a thinker or a dreamer, or a man of action; he was a student of men and women, and of the outcasts among men and women, just those people who are least accessible, least cared for, least understood, and therefore, to one like my friend, most alluring. He was not conscious of it, but I think there was a great pity at the heart of this devouring curiosity. It was his love of the outcast which made him like to live with outcasts, not as a visitor in their midst, but as one of themselves.

For here is the difference between this man and the other adventurers who have gone about among tramps, and criminals, and other misunderstood or unfortunate people. Some have been philanthropists, and have gone with the Bible in their hands; others have been journalists, and have gone with note-books in their hands; all have gone as visitors, plunging into "the bath of multitude," as one might go holiday making to the seaside and plunge into the sea. But this man, wherever he has gone, has gone with a complete abandonment to his surroundings; no tramp has ever known that "Cigarette"

was not really a tramp; he has begged, worked, ridden outside trains, slept in work-houses and gaols, not shirked one of the hardships of his way; and all the time he has been living his own life (whatever that enigma may be!) more perfectly, I am sure, than when he was dining every day at his mother's or his sister's table.

The desire of traveling on many roads, and the desire of seeing many foreign faces, are almost always found united in that half-unconscious instinct which makes a man a vagabond. But I have never met any one in whom the actual love of the road is so strong as it was in Flynt. I remember, some ten years ago, when we had given one another rendezvous at St. Petersburg, that I found, when I got there, that he was already half-way across Siberia, on the new railway which they were in the act of making. But for the most part he walked. Wherever he walked he made friends; when we used to walk about London together he would get into the confidence of every sailor whom we came upon in the pot-houses about the docks. He was not fastidious, and would turn his hand, as the phrase is, to anything. And he went through every sort of privation, endured dirt, accustomed himself to the society of every variety of his fellow-creatures, without a murmur or regret.

After all, comfort is a convention, and pleasure an individual thing to every individual. "To travel is to die continually," wrote a half-crazy poet who spent most of the years of a short fantastic life in London. Well, that is a line that I have often found myself repeating

as I shivered in railway stations on the other side of Europe, or lay in a plunging berth as the foam chased the snow flakes off the deck. One finds, no doubt, a particular pleasure in looking back on past discomforts, and I am convinced that a good deal of the attraction of traveling comes from an unconscious throwing forward of the mind to the time when the uncomfortable present shall have become a stirring memory of the past. But I am speaking now for those in whom a certain luxuriousness of temperament finds itself in sharp conflict with the desire of movement. To my friend, I think, this was hardy a conceivable state of mind. He was a stoic, as the true adventurer should be. Rest, even as a change, did not appeal to him. He thought acutely, but only about facts, about the facts before him; and so he did not need to create an atmosphere about himself which change might disturb. He was fond of his family, his friends; but he could do without them, like a man with a mission. He had no mission, only a great thirst; and this thirst for the humanity of every nation and for the roads of every country drove him onward as resistlessly as the drunkard's thirst for drink, or the idealist's thirst for an ideal.

And it seems to me that few men have realized, as this man realized, that " not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end." He chose his life for himself, and he has lived it, regardless of anything else in the world. He has desired strange, almost inaccessible things, and he has attained whatever he has desired. Once, as he was walking with a friend in the streets of

New York, he said suddenly: " Do you know, I wonder what it is like to chase a man? I know what it is like to be chased, but to chase a man would be a new sensation." The other man laughed, and thought no more about it. A week later Flynt came to him with an official document; he had been appointed a private detective. He was set on the track of a famous criminal (whom, as it happened, he had known as a tramp); he made his plans, worked them out successfully, and the criminal was caught. To have done it was enough: he had had the sensation; he had no need, at that moment, to do any more work as a detective. Is there not, in this curiosity in action, this game mastered and then cast aside, a wonderful promptness, sureness, a moral quality which is itself success in life?

To desire so much, and what is so human; to make one's life out of the very fact of living it as one chooses; to create a unique personal satisfaction out of discontent and curiosity; to be so much oneself in learning so much from other people: is not this, in its way, an ideal, and has not this man achieved it? He had the soul and the feet of a vagabond. He cared passionately for men and women, where they are most vividly themselves, because they are no longer a part of society. He wandered across much of the earth, but he did not care for the beauty or strangeness of what he saw, only for the people. Writing to me once from Samarcand, he said: " I have seen the tomb of the Prophet Daniel; I have seen the tomb of Tamerlane." But Tamerlane was nothing to him, the Prophet Daniel was nothing to

him. He mentioned them only because they would interest me. He was trying to puzzle out and piece together the psychology of the Persian beggar whom he had left at the corner of the way.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

FOREWORD

THIS book explains itself in most ways, I hope, and a prefatory portico almost seems superfluous. In general, such addenda are distasteful to me; they look like an apology for what the author has to offer later on. No portico would be attached to the edifice I have now constructed were it not that there are two points I want to make clear and have failed to do so sufficiently to my satisfaction in the narrative proper.

First, it is fair to state at the outset that an autobiography coming from a man under forty is, to say the least, an unconventional performance which requires some explanation. I believe it was no less a genius than Goethe, however, who hazarded the remark that what a man is going to do that's worth while he does before thirty. Goethe's own life gives the lie to the statement, but there is a kernel of truth in its suggestiveness. In my case there happens to be much more than a mere kernel of truth in the remark. What I am going to do as a passionate explorer of *Die Ferne*—the ever-disappearing Beyond—has been done for all time, so far as the Under World is concerned. The game is over and the

dealer retires. My dead Self I herewith put aside, and begin afresh with a new world. The old Self died hard. I can hear its bones rattling yet. But there came a time when it had to go, and now that I know that it is really and truly gone, that to-morrow morning, for instance, to find peace and contentment for the day it will not be necessary for me to take up my staff and go nervously through the same antics and searchings as of old, a sweet satisfaction steals over me and I am glad to be alive. This book puts a finish for the present, at any rate, on all that I have heretofore written about the Under World, and sums up what I won and lost during my wanderings.

The second point to be cleared up I will put interrogatively—Was it worth while, after living the life, finishing with it, and passing on to pastures new and green, to tell the story? Benvenuto Cellini, that cheerful romancer, declares that a man, on reaching forty, if he has done anything of value and importance, is justified in putting his exploits down in writing, that he is morally bound to do so indeed if he would hold up his head among his fellows. For nearly forty years I chased the Beyond—that misty and slippery sorceress, ever beckoning onward to the wanderer, yet never satisfying, never showing herself in her true deceitful colors, until after long years of acquaintance. The chase is made by many travelers of the Upper World, hypnotized as I was, but by me perforce in that strange Under World from which so many explorers never return. This, it seems to me, is worth telling about.

FOREWORD

I have made the story as simple and direct as possible. May he who reads it, if perchance the sorceress is tempting him, too, hold fast to a better ideal, although his life be narrow and his task to fulfill a tiresome routine.

MY LIFE

CHAPTER I

EARLIEST REMINISCENCES

MY old nurse once told me that I came into this world with a "cowl," which had to be snatched off quickly, else I should have laid there to be a prophet. Why a state of blindness at one's birth should premise extraordinary vision, spiritual or otherwise, later on, is not clear. No such vision has ever been vouchsafed to me; on the contrary, as my story will reveal, that early blindness continued in one form or another all through my search for *Die Ferne.*

My very earliest remembrance is a runaway trip, culminating in the village lockup. Although my mother declares that I was at least five years old when this happened, I have always believed that I was nearer four; at any rate, I remember that I wore dresses. The circumstances of the truancy and imprisonment were as follows: My parents were in the neighboring city for the day, and I had been left at home with the nurse. She had punished me pretty severely for some slight offense, and had then gone to the lake for water, leaving me in a lane in front of the house, very much disquieted. A sudden impulse to run took hold of me—anywhere, it did not matter, so long as the nurse could not find me.

So off I started with a rush for the main street of the village, my little white panties dangling along after me. That was my first conscious and determined effort to see the world in my own way and at my own discretion. It was the beginning of that long series of runaway excursions which have blessed or marred my life ever since. No child ever had a greater measure of unalloyed joy in his soul than I did when I dashed down that village lane, and no later escapade has ever brought me quite the same fine shade of satisfaction.

In the main street the village police officer stopped me, and on learning who I was, took me to the lockup for safe-keeping until my parents returned in the evening. I was not actually put in a cell—the lockup was fire station and village prison in one, and I was given the freedom of the so-called engine room. I remember that I spent most of the time sucking a stick of candy and marveling at the fire apparatus. Nevertheless it was imprisonment of a kind, and I knew it. It was the only punishment I received. My parents picked me up in the evening, apparently much amused. Could my father have realized what that initial truancy was to lead to I should probably have received one of his whippings, but fortunately he was in a mood to consider it humorously.

My father died at the early age of forty-two, when I was eight years old (1877). He was a tall, slender man, lithe, nervous and possessed of a long brown beard which always impressed me when looking at him. He was the editor-in-chief of a Chicago daily newspaper, which died six months after his demise. I have heard

it said that he was the only man who could have made the paper a success, and trying to do this probably wore him out. He had experimented with various activities before taking the newspaper position, but he thought that he had at last found his life-work when he developed into an editor. The last year of his life he became very much interested in church matters. He came of good New England stock, his American progenitor helping to found the town of Concord, Mass.

I have often heard it said that my father was a brilliant man gifted with a remarkable sense of humor. He did not favor me with his humorous side very often, but I do recall a funny incident in which he revealed to all of us children a phase of his character which my mother probably knew much more about. Although my father had to leave the old brown house early in the morning in order to catch his customary train for the city, he insisted rigidly on holding family prayers before leaving. These prayers did not mean much to me whatever they may have stood for with him, but there was one morning when they did please me. My old cat had brought a litter of kittens into the world over night, and at prayer time had deposited them in father's chair. Not noticing them, he took the Bible and proceeded to sit down. There ensued a great deal of miyowing and spitting. "Damn the cats!" exclaimed my father, springing up, and then taking another chair he continued with the prayers. I laughed over this happening all day, and my father never again exposed himself to me in such human garb.

Perhaps my older sister was his favorite child, if he played any favorites. Whether she understood him better than the rest of us did I cannot say, but her whippings seemed to me to come very infrequently. Her ability to get him out of a punishing mood is well illustrated by the following incident.

Something that she had done had vexed him, as I remember the story, and she was in a fair way to be punished—"whaled," indeed, my father being unwilling to distinguish between the sexes in whippings as they applied to children. My sister had an inspiration as we considered it at the time—climbing into her father's lap, and gently stroking his almost straight hair, she said softly: "What lovely, curly locks you have, Papa!" The incongruity of her remark made him smile, and when he had once passed this Rubicon in his punishing moods he became friendly. I was never as clever as my sister in interviews of this character. What boy is as clever as his sister, when it comes to acting?

My father gone, the battle of life for us children shifted to my mother. My father left very few funds behind him, and it was necessary for my mother to be mother and bread-winner at the same time. I shall not enter into an account of her various activities to keep the family together, but she did this somehow in most honorable and useful ways for nearly ten years, departing then for Germany with the two girls to engage in educational work. No man ever made a braver struggle against fearful odds than did this mother of mine, and when I think of my almost unceasing cussedness throughout her

struggle a remorse comes over me which is best not described. We stayed in the village during the ten years in question, and I grew to be a youth well on in my teens, but never looking my years, nor do I to-day in spite of the hard life I have led, and a great many days and nights spent in hospitals. This is not said to coddle my vanity. I merely mean that I got from my parents a wonderful constitution. I hardly think that the average man, had he risked his health as I have done, would have pulled through so well.

Our village, since developed into one of Chicago's most beautiful and fashionable suburbs—I sometimes think it is the most entrancing spot near a large city, so far as nature alone goes, that exists—was a strange locality for a wanderer of my caliber to grow up in. Settled originally by sturdy New Englanders and central New Yorkers, it early became a Western stronghold of Methodism. My people on both sides were early comers, my mother's father being a divinity professor in the local theological institute. My father's people inclined to Congregationalism I think, but they swung round, and when I knew my grandmother she was an ardent communicant among the Methodists. Such church instruction as I could stand was also found in this fold—or shall I say party? Some years ago an ex-governor of Colorado was saying nice things about my mother to the United States Minister in Berlin, and to clinch his argument why the Minister should look out for my mother, the ex-governor said: "And, Mr. Phelps, she belongs to the greatest political party in our

country—the Methodist Church!" It never interested me very much to look into the church's machinery—I had what seemed much more important and seductive work in planning and carrying out my runaway trips—but in later years I must confess to having been impressed with similarities in Methodism as a religious policy and politics as a business. Methodism considered simply as a religious organization, ought to be described by some one who can study it impartially. The struggle for the high places in the church at conferences is woefully like that in political conventions. Men who want to be bishops pull wires and secure supporters in almost identically the same way that office seekers in conventions make their arrangements, and the fat jobs in the ministry are as earnestly coveted by aspiring preachers as are political offices in the nation at large. Perhaps this is all right; certainly, if figures, churches and converts count, the Methodists have done a great work; but Methodism as a religious cult had to pass me by.

The good villagers tried numberless times to have me "converted," and officially I have gone through this performance a number of times. Strangely enough, after nearly every one of my earlier runaway trips and my humble return to the village, bedraggled and torn, some revivalist had preceded me, and was holding forth at a great rate in the "Old First," where my people communed. My grandmother, my father's mother, invariably insisted on my attending the revival services in the hope that finally I would come to my senses and really "get religion." As much as anything else to show

that I was sorry for the anxiety I had caused my mother during the latest escapade, I would take my grandmother's advice and join the mourners at the mercy seat. Two or three visits usually sufficed to effect a change in me, and I would hold up my hand with those who desired conversion. I was not insincere in this, far from it. It came from nervousness and a desire to go home and be able to say honestly that I meant to mend my ways. I shall never forget the last time I attempted to get Divine grace and healing at one of these meetings. The preceding escapade had been woefully bad, and it was very much up to me to atone for it in no unmistakable manner. The relatives were all looking at me askance, and the neighbors were cautioning their children more particularly than usual to keep out of my company. Indeed, I became at a jump the village "bad boy," and I never really got over this appellation. I have heard good Methodist mothers say, as I passed by in the street: "There goes that awful Flynt boy," and I came to look upon myself as the local boy outcast. In later years I have changed considerably in my attitude toward people who criticise and revile me, but at the time in question I was a timid, bashful lad in temperament, and the ruthless remarks made by the Methodist mothers—the Methodist fathers also discussed my "case" pretty mouthily—made scars in my soul that are there yet. The truth of the matter is, I was not so innately bad as my persistent running away and occasional pilfering seemed to imply. I was simply an ordinary boy possessed of an extraordinary bump for wandering, which,

when the " go-fever " was in me, sent me off to strange parts and peculiar adventures before any one had time to realize that I was in one of my tantrums. The attack would come so suddenly that I was off and away before I had myself fully realized that I had been seized with one of the periodical fits.

But to return for a moment to that last revival, and my last " conversion." " Josiah," said my grandmother, " there is a good man holding forth in the church to-night, and do you go over and get good from him." I was prepared to do anything to stop the critical glances of the village, and that evening I made what was supposed to be a full surrender and declared myself " converted " forever more. Whether the " good man " hypnotized me into all this, whether I consciously made public declaration of conversion from selfish motives, or whether it was all sincere and upright I can't tell now. Probably all three agencies were at work at the time. A retired captain in the army, himself a convert of not many months, put my name down in his book among those who had experienced a change of heart. " Josiah, this time you mean it, don't you? " he asked, and I said " Yes." I walked out of the church in a warm glow, and felt purged from sin as never before. A few weeks later I was off on another *Wanderlust* trip of exploration.

It is a pity in such cases that the truant's wanderings cannot be directed, if wander he must. In my case there was plainly no doubt that I possessed the nomadic instinct in an abnormal degree. Whippings could not

cure it, shutting me up in my room without any clothes only made the next seizure harder to resist, and moral suasion fell flat as a pancake. Revivals and conversions were serviceable merely in reinstating me temporarily in the good graces of my grandmother. The outlook ahead of me was dark indeed for my mother, and yet it was from her, as I have learned to believe from what she has told me in later years, that I probably got some of my wandering proclivities. There was a time in her life, I have heard her say, when the mere distant whistle of a railroad train would set her go-instincts tingling, and only a sense of duty and fine control of self held her back. This call of *Die Ferne,* as the Germans name it, this almost unexplainable sympathy with the slightest appeal or temptation to project myself into the Beyond —the world outside of my narrow village world—was my trouble from almost babyhood until comparatively a few years ago. The longing to go would come upon me without any warning in the dead of night sometimes, stealing into my consciousness under varying disguises as the years went by and the passion required fresh incentives to become active and alert. In the beginning a sudden turn of the imagination sufficed to send me worldwards, and I would be off without let or leave for a week at least, usually bringing up at the home of relatives in northern Wisconsin. They would entertain me for a time, and then I would be shipped back to the village to await another seizure. On one of these return trips I traveled on one of the most unconventional railroad passes I have ever known. The relative who generally

superintended the return to the village was an editor well known in his locality and to railroad men on the road. On one of the last visits paid to his home he determined not to trust me with the necessary money for the ticket, but to give me a personal note to the conductor, which he did. It read: "This is a runaway boy. Please pass him to —— and collect fare from me on your return." It was as serviceable at the time as any *bona fide* pass, annual or otherwise, that I have had and used in later years.

As I got well on into my teens and was at work with my school books, it naturally required a different kind of appeal to start me off on a trip from the simple call of the railroad train which had sufficed in the earlier years. For periods of time, long or short, as my temperament dictated, I became definitely interested in my books and in trying to behave, for my mother's sake, if for no other reason. I knew only too well that my failing caused her much anxiety and worriment, and for weeks I would honestly struggle against all appeals to vamose. Then, without any warning, the mere reading of some biography of a self-made man, who had struggled independently in the world from about my age on to the Presidency perhaps, would fire me with a desire to do likewise in some far-off community where there was the conventional academy and attendant helps to fame and fortune. There was an academy in our own village and I attended it, but the appeal to go elsewhere carried with it a picture of independence, midnight oil and self-supporting work, which fascinated me, and at

an age when most boys have got over their gusto for wandering, I would start off in secret, to return famous, some day, I hoped.

One of the last excursions undertaken with an idea of setting myself up in business or academic independence is worth describing. There had been considerable friction in the household on my account for several days, and I deliberately planned with a neighboring banker's son to light out for parts unknown. I was the proud owner of two cows at the time, furnishing milk to my mother and a few neighbors at an agreed upon price. I had been able to pay for the cows out of the milk money, and my mother frankly recognized that the cows were my property. The banker's boy was also imbued with the irritating friction in his family—he was considerably older and larger than I. We put our heads together and decided to go West—where, in the West, was immaterial, but toward the setting sun we were determined to travel. My companion in this strange venture had no such property to contribute toward financing the trip as I had, but he was the proud possessor of five greyhounds of some value, several guns and a saddle. We looked about the village for a horse and cart to carry us, and we at last dickered with a young man who owned a poor, half-starved, spavined beast and a rickety cart. I gave him my two cows in exchange for his outfit, a deal which netted him easily fifty per cent. profit. The cart loaded, our outfit was the weirdest looking expedition that ever started for the immortal West. The muzzles of guns protruded under the cover-

ing on the sides, the five dogs sniffed uneasily at the cart, and the dying steed threw his ears back in utter horror. In this fashion, one bright afternoon in spring, our hearts throbbing with excitement, we started forth on our Don Quixote trip, choosing Chicago as our first goal. We arrived in that city, twelve miles distant, after four days' travel and a series of accidents to both cart and horse. It was a Sunday morning, and we had found our way somehow to the fashionable boulevard, Michigan Avenue, about church time. Our outfit caused so much embarrassing amusement to the people in the street that we turned city-wards to find the station where the C. B. & Q. R. R. started its trains West. We knew of no other way to go West than to follow these tracks, I having already been over them as far as Iowa. We came to grief and complete pause in Madison Street. I was driving, and my companion was walking on the pavement. Suddenly, and without any warning, a stylishly dressed man hailed my companion, and asked him if his name was so-and-so, giving the young man's correct name. The latter " acknowledged the corn," as he afterwards put it to me, and I was told to draw up to the curb, where I learned that the dapper stranger was none other than a Pinkerton operative. Our trip West was nipped in the bud then and there. The cart was driven to a stable, and we boys were taken to the Pinkerton offices, where I spent the day pretty much alone, except when one of the Pinkertons, I think it was, lectured me about the horrors and intricacies of the West, and exhorted me to mend my ways and stay at home. Our

horse succumbed to his wanderings soon after being returned to his original owner, and my cows were got back by process of law.

Later on, a good old major, a friend of my mother's, recommended that she send me West in regular fashion, and let me see for myself. "A good roughing-it may bring him to his senses," said the major, and I was shipped to a tiny community in western Nebraska, consisting of a country store about the size of a large wood-shed, and four sod cabins. An older brother had preceded me here, and had been advised by letter to watch out for my coming. I shall never forget the woe-begone look on his face when I slipped off the snow-covered stage and said "Hello." He had not yet received my mother's letter of advice. "*You* here?" he groaned, and he led me into one of the sod houses. I explained matters to him, and he resigned himself to my presence, but I was never made to feel very welcome and in six weeks was home again, chastened in spirit and disillusionized about the West.

I must confess to still other runaway trips after this Western failure, but I have always felt that that undertaking did as much to cure my wandering disease as anything else. Dime novels soon ceased to have a charm for me, and home became more of an attraction. In spite of all this, however, in spite of some manly struggles to do right, my longest and saddest disappearance from home and friends was still ahead of me. It belongs to another section of the book, but I may say here that it wound up the runaway trips forever. The travels

that followed may have been prompted by the call of *Die Ferne*, but they were aboveboard and regular.

Now, whence came this strange passion, for such it was, found in milder form probably in all boys and in some girls, but uncommonly lodged in me? My pilferings and tendency to distort the truth when punishment was in sight I account for principally by those miserable whalings my father gave me. Punishment of some kind seemed to await me no matter how slight the offense, and I probably reasoned, as I have suggested above, that if " lickings " had to be endured it was worth while getting something that I needed or wanted in exchange for them. My mother very charitably accounts for my thefts and lies, on the ground that shortly before I was born the family's material circumstances were pretty cramped, and that this state of affairs may have reacted on me through her, producing my illicit acquisitiveness.

But that insatiable *Wanderlust,* that quick response to the lightest call of the seductive Beyond, that vagabond habit which caused my mother so much pain and worriment—where did *that* come from? It was a sorry homecoming for my mother at night when the runaway fever had sent me away again. She would come into the house, tired out, and ask the governess for news of the children. The latter would make her daily report, omitting reference to me. " And Josiah," my mother was wont to say, " where is he? " " Gone! " the poor governess would wail, and my mother would have to go about her duties the next day with a heavy heart. Now, why was I so perverse and pig-headed in this matter,

when I, myself, the fever having subsided, suffered real remorse after each trip? Even at this late day, after years of pondering over the case, I can only make conjectures. I have hinted that probably I inherited from my mother a love of being on the move, but she could control her desire to travel. For years I was a helpless victim of the whims of the *Wanderlust*. All that I have been able to evolve as a solution of the problem is this: Granted the innate tendency to travel, living much solely with my own thoughts, bashful and timid to a painful degree at times, and possessed of an imagination which literally ran riot with itself every few months or so, I was a victim of my own personality. This is all I have to offer by way of explanation. I have never met a boy or man who had been plagued to the same degree that I was.

CHAPTER II

YOUTHFUL DAYS AT EVANSTON

THAT Western village in which I grew up and struggled with so many temptations and sins deserves a chapter to itself. Doubtless there are some very good descriptions extant of small Middle West communities of twenty-five and thirty years ago, but I do not happen to have run across any which quite hit off the atmosphere and general make-up which characterized my village on the western shore of Lake Michigan. Yet there were probably many other settlements very similar in structure and atmosphere all through Illinois and southern Wisconsin, peopled by sturdy New England folk and charged with New England sentiment.

As I have already said, my village was singularized from other near-by communities of the same size on account of the Methodists having selected it for one of their Western strongholds. The place stood for learning, culture and religion in sectarian form in very pronounced outlines, and even in my childhood it was called the Athens of the West, or at any rate one of them. They are so numerous by courtesy to-day that it is difficult to keep track of them.

YOUTHFUL DAYS AT EVANSTON

The village of my childhood was bounded for me on the north by a lighthouse and waterworks, and on the south by the main street, or " store " section. To the east was the lake, and to the west the " Ridge," a sloping elevation where the particularly " rich " people lived. This was all the world to me until my sixth or seventh year, when perhaps I got a fleeting glimpse of Chicago, and realized that my world was pretty thin in settlement at least. But I did not see much of Chicago until I was well on into my teens, so I may practically say that the village was the one world I knew well for a number of years in spite of my runaway trips, which were too flighty to permit me to get acquainted, except superficially, with the communities visited.

Our house was a rambling old frame affair about midway between the main street and the lighthouse, built very near the lake. Here I grew up with my brother and sisters. The territory between the house and the lighthouse was " free;" we children could roam in the fields there without special permission, also on the shore and in the university campus immediately in front of the house across a lane. But beyond these limits special passports were required; the main street we were not to explore at all, innocent affair though it was.

The lake and the shore were our particular delight, and on pleasant days it is no exaggeration to say that my brother and I spent half our time roasting in the sand and then dashing into the cool water for a swim. Other boys from the village proper—real citified they seemed to me—joined us frequently, and at an early

age I had learned to smoke cigarettes, and had a working vocabulary of " cuss " words, which I was careful, however, to exercise almost exclusively in the sand. Whether I took to these habits earlier than most boys do now, I cannot say, but by nine I was a good beginner in the cigarette business, and by ten could hold my own in a cussing contest. My mother once washed my mouth out with soap and water for merely saying " Gee! " What she would have done to me could she have heard some of my irreverences in the sand is pitiful to think of. Right here was one of the main snags we boys ran up against—in being boys, in giving vent to our vitality, we offended the prim notions of conduct which our cultured elders insisted upon; and to be ourselves at all, we had to sneak off to caves in the lake bank or to swimming and cigarette smoking exercises, where, of course, we overdid the thing, and then lied about it afterwards. I learned more about fibbing and falsely " explanationing " how I had disposed of my time at this period of my life than at any later period, and I boldly put the blame now on the unmercifully strict set of rules which the culture and religion in the place deemed essential. My mother, and later on, my father, were steeped in this narrow view of things just as badly as were my grandparents. The Sunday of those days I look back upon with horror. Compulsory church and Sunday school attendance, stiff " go-to-meeting " clothes, and a running order to be seen but not heard until Monday morning is what I recall of my childhood Sundays. Church-going, religion and Sunday school lessons be-

The Boy—Josiah Flynt—at the Age of Thirteen

came a miserable bore, and it is only in very recent years that I have been able to get any enjoyment out of a sermon, no matter how fine it may be.

My parents were to blame for all this secondarily only, as I think of it now. They were unconsciously just as much victims of the prudery and selfish local interpretation of the Ten Commandments as we children were consciously *their* victims. They had conformed to the " system " in vogue as children in other similar communities, and they literally did not or would not, know anything else when they were in the village. My father very likely knew of many other things in Chicago, but he did not ventilate his knowledge of them in the village. Before my parents, my grandfathers and grandmothers had been among the main stalwarts in supporting the " system."

The intellectual life of the place centered, of course, around the university and the Biblical Institute. How broad and useful this intellectual striving may have been I did not know as a boy, and in later years absence from the place has made it impossible for me to judge of its present effectiveness. The village was saturated with religious sentiments of one kind or another, and I am inclined to believe that overdoing this kind of thinking dwarfed the villagers' mental horizon.

The university had a clause in its charter from the State authorities which forbade the sale of all intoxicating liquors within a four-mile radius of the university building. A small hamlet four miles to the north and a cemetery village four miles to the south were the

nearest points where the village boys could get any liquor. The village fathers have always been very proud of the prohibitory clause, and in my day were much given to flattering themselves, that, thank God! they were not like other people. Now, what were the facts as I learned to know them as a boy? I have referred to the " Ridge," the slope on the west, where the richer people lived. I make no doubt whatsoever that the " Ridge " families that wanted wine and beer had it in their homes—the university charter could not stop that—but their boys, or many of them, for the fun and lark of the thing, made pilgrimages to the northern and southern drinking stations, and at times reeled home in a scandalous condition. Those old enough to go to Chicago would also stagger back from there late at night. Of the boys and young men, from the " Ridge " as well as from down in the village, who participated in such orgies, I can remember a dozen and more, belonging to the " nicest " families in the place, who went to the everlasting bow-wows. I say a dozen offhand, there were in reality more, because I have heard about them later, after leaving the village. Far be it from me to put the blame on the university charter, but I am compelled to say that in all such communities the existing drunkenness and lewdness at least *seem* worse than in communities where liquor is sold and drunk openly. Perhaps they seem so because a drunken person is theoretically an anomaly in prohibition towns and villages, but whatever the reason, our village, with all its goodness, learning and piety, turned out much more than its

share of ne'er-do-wells. As I have tried to show, I gave every promise of becoming one of the failures on whom the refining village influences had worked in vain, and for years I am sure that the neighbors prophesied for me a very wicked career and ending, but I do not recall ever having made a trip to the drinking bouts, north or south.

The educational facilities, public school, high school, the academy (preparatory to the university), and the university itself, all in the village, made it easy for those boys who would and could, to complete their academic courses within call of their own homes. My public school attendance was short, and I was then taught at home by my mother or by tutors. I ran away from school as regularly as from home. Finally, to have a check on me, my mother and teacher hit upon this plan: The teacher, every day that I appeared in the classroom, was to give me a slip of paper with "All Right" written on it, which I was to show to my mother on returning home. One day, when I was about ten years old, the "hookey" fever captured me, and I paid a visit to my grandmother—my father's mother—whose doughnuts were an everlasting joy to me. When the noon hour arrived, and it was about time for me to show up at home, I said to my grandmother: "Grandma, you write something for me to copy, and see how well I write." "All right, my boy," said my grandmother, who took much interest in my school progress. "What shall I write?"

"Suppose you write the words 'All Right,'" I

replied. " I have been practicing on them a good deal." The good old soul wrote for me the desired " copy " quite unsuspectingly, and to allay any suspicions that she might otherwise have had, I dutifully copied her writing as best I could. Then I thanked her, and on the way home, trimmed my grandmother's " All Right " to the size of the slips held by the teacher. I did not seem to realize that the teacher wrote any differently from my grandmother, or that my mother was well acquainted with my grandmother's handwriting. Indeed, for a lad who could be as " cute and slick as they make 'em," when it came to a real runaway trip, I was capable at other times of doing the most stupid things—to wit, the " All Right " adventure. My mother detected the trick of course, and I was reported to my father, but he seemed to see the humorous side of the affair, and let me off with a scowl.

Winter underclothing and overcoats assisted in making my public school attendance a trial. For some reason I abhorred these garments, and my mother very rightfully insisted on their being worn, particularly when I trudged to the schoolhouse in winter. The coat was shed as soon as I was out of my mother's sight, and the underclothing was hidden in an outhouse in the schoolyard until time to go home. At home also I discarded such things whenever possible, and, one day, I was caught in the act, as it were, by one of our family physicians, a woman. I was sitting on her lap, and she was tickling me near the knee. She noticed that my stockings seemed rather " thin," and began to feel for my under-

clothing. "Why, where is it, Josiah?" she finally exclaimed.

"Oh, it's rolled up," I replied nonchalantly. Again the good woman tried to locate it, but without success. "Rolled up where?" she asked. "Oh, 'way up," I answered, trying to look unconcerned. Pressed to tell exactly how "high up" the rolling had gone, I finally confessed that the garments were rolled up in my bureau drawer. Again the humor of the situation saved me from a whipping, and I gradually became reconciled to the clothing in question.

Village playmates, the cosmopolitans of the main street as I considered them, entered very little into my life under ten, and I associated principally with my brothers and sisters and a neighbor's boy—the nephew of a celebrated writer—who lived very near our great brown house. Whether other children quarreled and wrangled the way we did it is hard to say—I hope not—but without doubt we gave our mother a great deal of trouble. Strangely enough, for I was very prone at times to assert my rights and fight for them, too, I once outdid my older brother and sister in a competitive struggle to be good for one week. It was while my father was still alive. He had promised us a prize, and when anything like that was in sight, I was willing to make a try for it anyhow. So I shut off steam for a week, minded my p's and q's pretty carefully, and lo, and behold! when Saturday night came, and my mother was asked to give the decision, I was the lucky competitor. The prize was the New Testament—a typical gift

—bound in soft red leather, with a little strap to hold it shut when not in use. On the fly-leaf my father wrote these words: "To Josiah, from his father, for having behaved for one week better than his older brother and sister." The victory over the older children was my main gratification, but I found the Testament useful also, committing to memory from it for twenty-five cents, at my grandmother's request, the fourteenth chapter of John.

I can only account for a very "soft" thing that I let myself into not long after winning the prize to the weakening process in being good for the week in question.

My father had a cane, a twisted and gnarled affair, which he seldom used, but preserved very carefully in a closet off the "spare room" of the house. I have always believed that my brother and sister broke it, but they got around me, and wheedled me into saying that I had done it. Indeed, they bribed me with marbles and a knife, and said that the voluntary confession would be so manly that my father could not possibly punish me. Consequently, I did not wait for the broken cane to be discovered, but went boldly to my father, one night, and told him that I was the culprit, and how sorry I was. He looked at me earnestly with his immense blue eyes for a moment, and then, putting his long, thin hand on my shoulder, said: "Noble lad! to have come and told me. Perhaps we can mend it somehow," and that was the last that was ever heard of the matter.

My playmate over the fence, the celebrated writer's nephew, was my most intimate companion during all

this period; I was nearer to him in play and study than to either of my sisters or brother. Although a good boy in every way, as I now recall him, I fear that our companionship did us both harm for a while. He was stockier and taller than I was, and if he had realized and been willing to exercise his strength, he could have put me in my right place very soon, but he did not appreciate his power. The consequence was that he allowed me to bully him unmercifully, and his accounts of my prowess gained for me a fighter's reputation in the village, a fictitious notoriety which clung to me strangely enough for several years. Besides being called a "bad" boy I became known as a youngster who knew how to use his fists—a myth if there ever was one—and I was enough of an actor and sufficiently cautious in my encounters to be able to give some semblance of truth to this report. The evil effects of this posing on me were that I allowed myself to be put in a false light as a "scrapper," and I was continually on the watch not to risk my reputation in any fair struggle; my companion over the fence lost confidence in himself, and allowed me to bully and browbeat him, his manliness suffering accordingly.

Many and varied were our escapades in our part of the village, and for years we were seldom seen apart. The most reckless adventure that I can recall now occurred when my companion's house was being built, a three-story affair. The other boy and I were exercising our skill one day on the floor timbers of the third story, or garret, walking across the beams, a leg to a

beam, the space between the beams running through to the cellar. Suddenly I made a misstep, and fell through the open space to the cellar, partially breaking the fall by my hands clutching madly at the cellar-floor beams. I escaped with a few scratches, but I now count the escape one of the narrowest of several that I have had.

As a playmate I was generally tractable and willing, but I never lost an opportunity to "boss," if I could do so without loss of prestige. Bird-nesting, baseball, riding bareback on an old farm horse, swimming and walking were the main summer pastimes; in winter, there was skating, sledding, snow-balling, and "shinny"—both sets of amusements being typical of a Middle West boy's life twenty to thirty years ago. There was also fishing and hunting, but I was too fidgety to fish successfully, and I was never presented with a gun. "Vealish" love affairs with girl companions were indulged in by some of the boys, but my uncertain reputation and a "faked" or natural indifference to girls, I know not which, kept me out of such entanglements; probably bashfulness had as much to do with the indifference as anything else. That I was so bashful and at the same time a bully and would-be leader sounds inconsistent, but at the time of my father's death, there was probably not a boy in the village who could be made to shrink up, as it were, from social timidity, as I could. Indeed, this characteristic impresses me now, on looking back over my childhood, as the predominant one in my nature at that time, and even to-day, it crops out inconveniently, on occasion. A friend, who knows me well, recently

remarked to a common friend of both of us: "Why is it that Flynt draws into his shell when strangers join us at dinner. When we three are alone, he talks as much as any of us. Let an outsider or two drop in, and he shuts down instanter. Can you explain it?" I can. Those silent fits are an aftermath of the exaggerated bashfulness of my childhood—I simply cannot overcome them.

CHAPTER III

REST COTTAGE

NOT long after my father died our family deserted the old brown house which remains in my memory still as the one independent home I have known in life. The old building has long since flown away on wings of fire and smoke, but I recall every nook and cranny in it from cellar to garret. There we children came to consciousness of ourselves, got acquainted with one another as a family, and played, quarreled, made up again until the old house must have known us very intimately. I prize very highly having had this early love for a house—it redeems somewhat those bad traits in my character which were so deplored.

An interim home was found for us in the village proper until an addition for our use could be built to my grandmother's house, not far from the main street.

One of my teachers, while we lived in the interim house, was a distant relative, who had a home a few doors removed from ours. I also went to the public school, at intervals, but of my teachers at that time I remember best Miss B——. She taught my older sister and myself such things as it interested her to teach,

and in a way we got a smattering knowledge, at least, of History, Art, Mathematics (a plague on them!) and, I think, French. Nothing that the good dame taught us, however, ever made the impression on me that certain of her mannerisms did. She was a spinster, no longer young, and her mannerisms were doubtless the result of living much alone. An expression which she constantly used, in and out of season, was " For that." Putting a book down on the table, or straightening a disordered desk, called forth a " For that " after every move she made. It had no significance or meaning at any time that I heard her use it, but if she used it once in a day she did so a hundred times at least. I finally came to call her " Miss For That."

She was furthermore the cause of my coining a word which is still used in our immediate family. Some one asked me, one afternoon, how Miss B—— impressed me, and I am alleged to have replied: " She's so *spunctuated.*" To the rest of the family it seemed a very good characterization of the lady, they understanding the word apparently quite as well as I thought that I did. Later I was often asked what I meant by the word, and it has never been easy to tell exactly; our family took it in and harbored it because they knew Miss B—— and seemed to grasp immediately my meaning. What the word conveyed to me was this: that Miss B—— was inordinately prim and orderly, and that as in a written sentence, with its commas, and semicolons, her verbal sentences needed just so many " For Thats " to satisfy her sense of neatness. I even found

her form of punishment for me, when I had been unruly, " spunctuated." I had to sit in the coal hod on such occasions, and the way Miss B—— ordered me into the bucket, with an inevitable " For that " or two, sandwiched in with the command, increased her " spunctuatedness " in my estimation very noticeably.

The good woman eventually married, and I think lost some of her painful primness; but the word she helped me to invent still survives. I have been told that friends who have visited our home and could appreciate the word's meaning, have also incorporated it in their vocabularies. In some ways human beings the world over could be divided up into the " spunctuated " and the " unspunctuated."

In the annex attached to my grandmother's home my village life and early boyhood found their completion. When we left this home the family became scattered, one going one way and the others some other way; we have never all been together since the break-up. My brother, for instance, I have not seen in nearly twenty years, and have no idea where he is to-day. He also was possessed of *Wanderlust,* indeed we might as well call ourselves a *Wanderlust* family, because every one of us has covered more territory at home and abroad than the average person can find time, or cares, to explore. While living in the interim house my mother tried an experiment with me. She sent me away to a boys' boarding school about fifty miles north of Chicago. There had been a general family council of grandparents, uncles and aunts, and it was hoped that a

change of control and discipline would achieve changes for the better in me.

The school was in the hands of an old English pastor and his wife, and they had succeeded in giving a certain English look to the old white building and grounds. My mother and I arrived at this institution of learning, so-called, one evening about supper time. The other boys, twenty-odd in number, ranging in years from ten to eighteen, were in the dining room munching their bread and molasses. It seemed to me at the time that I should certainly die when my mother left, and I should be alone with that rabble. Compromises and taking a back seat were to be inevitable in all intercourse with the larger boys, and the lads of my own age looked able to hold their own with me in any struggle that might occur. It was plain that I could bully no longer, and there was a possibility that the tables would be turned, and that I should be the one bullied. These thoughts busied me very much that night, which I spent with the master in his room. By morning I had half-a-dozen escapes well planned, leading back to the home village, and they lightened the parting from my mother, who seemed quite pleased with the school.

Getting acquainted with the other scholars proved a less arduous task than I had anticipated, which may be partly explained by the fact that my roommate had arrived on the same day that I did, and we were able to feel our way together, as it were. As a lad, and to-day as well, if there is any strange territory to be covered, or an investigation is on, I feel pretty much at a loss

without some kind of a companion, either human or canine.

The experience at the school, however, fairly pleasant and instructive though it became as I got over a preliminary homesickness, made such a faint impression on my character, one way or the other, that there is but little of interest, beyond my abrupt French leave-taking, to report. There had been several abortive attempts to get away before the final departure, but we—I always had companions in these adventures—were invariably overhauled and brought back. A well-meant "lecture" followed our capture, that was all. Indeed the days spent in the school were the only days of my early boyhood free of whippings. They were sometimes promised, but the good old pastor relented at the last moment and let me off with a reprimand.

The runaway trip that finally succeeded was most carefully planned and executed. For days four of us discussed routes, places where we could get something to eat, and railway time-tables; and the boy who knew Chicago best arranged for our reception there, if we should get that far. This time we were not going to take to the railroad near the village; we had failed there too often. We knew of another railroad some eight miles inland, and this became our first objective. We left the school at night when the master and the scholars were asleep. Carrying our shoes in our hands, our pockets stuffed with surplus socks and handkerchiefs, we stole out of the old white building unobserved, and on into a cornfield, where we put on our

shoes and made sure once again that we had not been followed. Then, light-hearted and happy in the thought that we were free, we tramped rapidly to the railroad. Reaching a good sized station about one o'clock, we awaited an express train due in an hour or so. It came thundering along on schedule time, and two boys " made " the " blind baggage," while the Chicago boy and I perched ourselves just behind the cow-catcher. After this dare-devil fashion we rode into Chicago, arriving there just as the milkman and baker-boy were going their rounds. The darkness, of course, had helped us immensely. We had no money for car-fare, and had to pick our way through a labyrinth of streets before we found our Chicago companion's barn, where we rolled ourselves up in some very dirty carpets on the floor and fell asleep to dream of freedom and its delights.

This escape, so thorough and cleancut, satisfied my mother that the school was not the place for me, and I was taken back to the village, the new home adjoining my grandmother's, and handed over to the tender mercies of tutors again. A new life began for me, a new life in a number of ways. Although the two houses were connected, and our family could pass over into grandmother's quarters and *vice versa,* we children were cautioned to keep on our own side of the fence most of the time. Nevertheless, our grandmother was almost always accessible, particularly when her daughter, our noted aunt, was away on a lecturing tour. This was a great boon in many respects, because our mother

was in the city all day, and we certainly used to get tired of the governess.

This grandmother of mine stands out in my memory of childhood more distinctly than any other character, except, of course, my mother. She was one of the most remarkable women it has been my good fortune to know well. A famous English lady, who visited my aunt years after our particular family had scattered, insisted on calling my grandmother "Saint Courageous," and I have always thought that she well deserved this title. For years, while my aunt was traveling over the country, lecturing on temperance and woman's rights, my grandmother would live patiently alone with a Swedish servant, glorying in her daughter's fame and usefulness, and carefully pasting press notices of her work in a scrapbook.

My brother, "Rob," was grandmother's pet. He was her son's firstborn and her first grandchild, and what Rob did, good or bad, found praise and excuses in her eyes. We other children had to take a back seat, so to speak, when Rob was at home, but this was only intermittently, after he undertook to be a civil engineer. When I last saw him he had experimented with about as many activities as he had lived years, and he was still very undecided about any one of them. In a way this has been a family characteristic among us children, at any rate among us boys. Mother early noticed this tendency, and literally begged of us to let her see us through college, as did our grandmother, so that, whatever we undertook later on, we might have educational qualifica-

tions for any opportunity that presented itself. She was doomed to disappointment in this matter in the case of all four. Each one of us has experimented with college life, and I, as will be told later on in detail, smuggled myself into the Berlin University as a student of political economy, but there is not a diploma to-day among the four of us.

My grandmother's room on her side was in the front, and here she spent most of her time, reading, tending her scrapbook and flowers, keeping track of her famous daughter's travels, and nearly every day receiving visits from some of us children. I have spent some of the happiest hours of my life in that quaint room, telling grandmother about my school life, what I wanted to be, and reading to her such things, usually verses, as she or I liked. She thought that I read well, and if the "piece" was pathetic, I used to gauge my rendering of it by the flow of tears from grandmother's eyes. I watched them furtively on all pathetic occasions. Gradually the lids would redden, a tear or two would drop, her dear old lips would quiver—and I had succeeded. Grandmother seemed to enjoy the weeping as much as I enjoyed its implied praise. These "sittings" in her room have overcome many and many an impulse on my part to run away; and I can recall purposely going to her room and society to try and conquer the temptation that was besetting me, although I did not tell her what I had come to her for. What she meant to the other children I do not know, but, my mother being away so much, and the governess representing solely discipline

and control, grandmother became almost as dear to me as my mother. Strange to relate, however, I was never demonstratively affectionate with her, nor she with me, whereas I was very distinctly so with my mother when I was trying to be good. They tell a story about me to-day of how, when after supper mother had settled herself in one of the large chairs near the stove, I would climb into her lap and say: "Hug me, mother, I need it." Probably no lad ever needed mothering more than I did, but out on the road, curiously enough, while still quite young, I could dig a hole in a haystack and fall asleep as easily as at home in my own bed, which goes to show what a bundle of contrasts and mixtures I was. One day, as tractable a scholar and playmate as the village contained; the next, very possibly, irritable, cross, moody and wavering, like a half-balanced stick, between a vamose or home.

Grandmother's visits to our side of the house were comparatively infrequent—she loved to be in her room —but when we children got to fighting, her tall, majestic form and earnest face were sure to appear. "Children, children!" she would cry, "'tis for dogs and cats to bark and bite. Josiah, leave Robert alone!" On one occasion the governess had been utterly powerless to control us, and my older sister and I were determined to "do up" Rob, grandmother's pet, once and for all. We thought that he had been teasing us unmercifully, and we went at him, sister unarmed and I with a stove poker. How I managed it at the time I cannot say now, for he was decidedly stronger and larger than I

was; but I succeeded somehow, with sister's help, in getting him down on the floor, where I was whacking him manfully with the poker, sister looking on well satisfied, when grandmother appeared. "Josiah!" she shouted, stamping her foot, "let your brother up." Whack went the poker, and, of course, Rob yelled. Indeed, the noise made during this fisticuff exceeded that of any previous encounter, and the neighbors probably said: "Those Flynt children are at it again." "Josiah!" my grandmother roared this time, "I'll have the police, this can't go on. Release your brother instantly." I gave him a final whack, and judiciously retreated with the poker and my sister. Rob was for renewing the attack, but grandmother led him off to her room for repairs, and the physical victory at least was ours.

But all of our days were not accompanied by battles. Several days, perhaps, could go by, without even harsh words being spoken, and peace reigned on both sides of the house, which, before we children got into it, was gladly known as and called "Rest Cottage." In name, and except when our quarrels went echoing through the older side, grandmother's part was also in fact a haven of rest for herself and my much traveled aunt. But I have often thought that if some of the many pilgrims who have gone to the village merely to see the house could have surprised us children in one of our quarrels, they would have scouted the propriety of the cottage's name.

When my brother was away, which was the case more

often than not, after he refused to continue his schooling, I was inclined to idealize him, and when he had been absent, say for several months and news came of his home-coming, I was very proud and happy. On one occasion he came back with his voice much changed, it had begun to take on a mannish tone, and I was prodigiously impressed with this metamorphosis, running secretly to grandmother, and whispering: " Rob's back! His voice has gone way down deep," and I put my hand on my stomach by way of illustration. My brother's elevation on a pedestal in my imagination, however, never lasted long, because we invariably crossed tempers within a few days, and that meant vulgar familiarity.

For years, nevertheless, I persisted in using him as a bluff in all threatening fisticuffs with playmates of my size, whether he was at home or not. " If I can't lick you," I was wont to say, " Bob can, and he'll do it, too." For a time this boast kept me out of all serious entanglements, but I had posed so long as a winner, and had bragged so much about what Bob could do, that a Waterloo was inevitable, and at last it came. Bob was unfortunately for me away from home at the time.

The fight was a fixed-up affair among three brothers, the second oldest being desirous of giving me a good hiding as a preliminary advertisement of his prowess. The four of us met by agreement in the alley behind " Rest Cottage," and my antagonist and I were soon at it. He was easily a half-head taller than I was, and

a good deal stockier, but I think that I had said that I could whip him, and I honestly tried to make good. He remained cool and collected, delivering well directed and telling blows on my physiognomy. The gore ran from my nose, and tears of rage from my eyes, as never before or since. But I fought on blindly, hitting my adversary only occasionally, and even then with very little force. At last, utterly beaten and exposed, I ran from the field-of-battle, shouting back over my shoulder, "Bob'll do you all up, you spalpeens." My grandmother mopped my battered face, and tried to console me, but it was a hard task. I knew what she didn't know, that my bluff had been called, and that I was no longer an uncertain quantity in the village fighting world; I had been "shown up." For days I shunned my regular playmates, and I can say that after that defeat I never fought another mill, and I never expect to fight one again. In five minutes I was completely converted to the peace movement, and have earnestly advocated its principles from the day of the fight to this very moment.

When my aunt was at home "Rest Cottage," or rather her side of it, was a regular beehive of industry. Secretaries and typewriters were at work from morning till night, while my aunt caught up with her voluminous correspondence in her famous "Den." Although we did not always get on well together, almost invariably through my waywardness, I desire to say now, once and forever, that she was one of the most liberal minded women I ever knew; and as a speaker and organizer, I

doubt whether in her time there was any woman who excelled her. Had she devoted her life to more popular subjects than temperance and woman's rights, literature, for instance, she would take very high rank to-day in the lists of great orators and writers. She preferred by conviction to devote herself unreservedly to the unpopular agitations, and her following was therefore found principally among women who agreed with her at the start, or who were won over to her opinions by her persuasive gift of language. In England, she was not infrequently likened unto Gladstone, and in Edinburgh, where she spoke during one of her visits to Great Britain, the students, after the meeting, unhooked the horses and themselves pulled her carriage to her hotel. Her statue in Statuary Hall in the capitol at Washington is the only statue of a woman found there; it was presented by the State of Illinois.

To live in a celebrity's home of this character was a privilege which, I fear, we children did not appreciate. It was a Mecca for reformers of all shades and grades from all over the world, and we children grew up in an atmosphere of strong personalities. The names of many of the men and women who visited our house have escaped me, but I recall very distinctly John B. Gough. On this occasion he was entertained by my mother, my aunt being absent from home. He was an old man with white hair and beard, and was in charge of a niece, if I remember correctly, who tended him like a baby. A local organization had hired him to speak for them in the "Old First." His speech was as successful as

usual, and the church was crowded, but the old gentleman was tired out when he got back to the house, and was rather querulous. My mother had prepared a light supper for him of milk, bread and butter and the like, but it was not to his taste. " I need tea," he declared in no uncertain tones, and tea had to be made, the delay increasing the old agitator's impatience. On getting it, he found it too weak, or too strong, or too hot, and the upshot of the affair was that he left us rather out of sorts, but not before receiving $200, his fee for the lectures. He tucked the roll carelessly into a small overcoat pocket, and then took his leave. Old age had begun to tell on him very plainly, and not many years after he died.

Francis Murphy, John P. St. John, nearly all the later candidates for the Presidency on the Prohibition ticket, and of course the prominent women agitators of the time, found their way to " Rest Cottage," sooner or later. The place itself, although comfortable and cozy, was very modest in appearance, but it probably sheltered at one time or another during the last fifteen years of my aunt's life, more well-known persons than any other private home of the Middle West. My aunt also kept in touch with a great many people through her correspondence. She believed in answering every letter received even if the reply were shipped back with deficient postage, and she knew by letter or personal acquaintance all the great men and women of her day, that I have ever heard of. If an author's book pleased her, she wrote him to that effect, and often *vice versa.*

On the appearance of Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward" she was distressed that he had not eliminated alcoholic beverages from the programme of his Utopia, and wrote him to this effect. He replied, very simply, that the thought had not occurred to him, which must be his excuse, if excuse were necessary, for overlooking the matter.

In the village my aunt was easily the main citizen of the place so far as fame went. There were many who did not agree with her notions of reform, but the village, as a whole, was proud to have such a distinguished daughter.

When criticising my escapades and backslidings, my aunt, I have been told, was wont to say that, "Josiah has character and will power, but he wills to do the wrong things." No doubt I did. If companions joined me in a runaway bout, it was I, as a rule, who planned the "get-away"; only on one or two occasions was I persuaded by others. More or less the same motives actuated me in running away from "Rest Cottage" as had formerly prevailed when living in the old brown house, but I am inclined to think now that, consciously or unconsciously, I would get tired of living entirely with women, and that this also may have had something to do in starting me off. Except when my brother was at home, which was at this time only infrequently, I was the only male human being living at "Rest Cottage"; from grandmother down to my younger sister all the other inmates were females, and there was a feminine atmosphere about things which used to get on my nerves

more than my mother realized. My dogs—I generally had two—were males, and many is the consolatory stroll we have taken if for no other reason than to consolidate our forces.

My love of dogs goes back as far as I can remember, and I have always tried to have some representative of this species around me. The dog who stood by me at "Rest Cottage" and helped me to increase the masculine forces, was called "Major." Not only because he was my constant companion, but also because he was the source of one or two "spats" between my aunt and myself, determines me to tell his story, or at least what I know of it.

One evening, my mother returned late from the city accompanied by a burly, black dog. I afterwards decided that he was a cross between a Shepherd and a Newfoundland. "I've brought you a dog," said mother, and I jumped up with glee, being quite dogless at the time. The dog snarled, and drew close to my mother. In fact, he sat at her feet throughout the evening meal, refusing to have anything to do with me, although he accepted in very friendly fashion the advances of my sisters. I concluded with disappointment that he had been a *woman's* dog. My mother told us how she had come by him. "On leaving the depot in town," she said, "and starting for my office, this dog jumped suddenly before me, barked, and evidently, from his actions, took me for his mistress. I patted him, and went along to the office—the dog followed. He went up to my office, and

when I took my seat at my desk, he made a place for himself near-by. At noon time I shared my lunch with him. He spent the afternoon very decorously either under or near the desk.

"When it came train time I thought that surely the dog would scent his way home, but no; he followed me to the station, as if I was the only one in the world that he knew, or cared to know. It seemed too bad to cast such a dog adrift, and I asked the baggageman of the train what he thought I ought to do. 'Take him home, Missus,' he said, 'he's worth while and'll make you a good beast.' We got him into the car, and he lay quiet until we got here. The minute he was turned loose, however, he scooted around in front of the engine and up toward the Ridge as hard as he could go. I said to the baggageman: 'There goes both dog and the quarter for his fare.' 'The ungrateful beast,' the baggageman replied, 'but perhaps he'll come back,' and sure enough he did, after the train had pulled out again. He followed me here to the house all right, and, Josiah, I am going to give him to you."

It was the biggest dog I had ever owned, but possession, despite my mother's statement, looked doubtful—the dog had decided that he belonged to mother. That same evening my mother and I went out to call, taking the dog with us. It was very dark, and before we had gone a block, we missed the dog. "There," I exclaimed, when we moved on after fruitless whistles and calls, "there, I told you to leave him at home, and now you see I was wise. He's lit out." "Oh, I guess not,"

my mother consoled me, and she was right, for, on returning to our home, there was that big, black dog on the rug waiting to be let in.

He stayed with us without a break for seven years, learned to accept me as his master, and whip him though I would at times, he won my respect and love as no other dog ever had at that time. He was not young when we got him, probably six years old at least, so he lived to a respectable old age. In saying that he was companionable, honest, more or less discreet, and fond of us all, I have told about all that is necessary about his personality. Tricks he had none, and he was too dignified and rheumatic to learn any from me. He merely wanted to be sociable, keep guard at night, and, if it suited our convenience, his " three squares " a day, but he very seldom asked for them, nor did he need to. He had his likes and dislikes of course, like all dogs, but if left alone, except when unusually rheumatic and irritable, he bothered nobody.

He came to cause trouble between me and my aunt in this way: She was at home a good deal, one winter, when I was vainly trying to teach " Major " to haul me on my sled. He disliked this occupation very much, and the only way I could get him to pull me at all, was to take him to the far end of the village, near our old brown house, hitch him to the sled, and then let him scoot for home. It's a wonder that he didn't dash my brains out against trees and passing vehicles, but we always got home without a mishap.

One morning, I was bent on a ride, and " Major "

was on the back porch, nursing, or rather pretending to, as I thought, his rheumatic legs. I treated him rather severely, convinced that he was shamming, and he set up a most uncanny howling. My aunt came rushing down the stairs, saw what I was trying to do, and gave me one of her very few scoldings—a chillier one I have seldom received. Unless I could be more merciful to dumb animals, she warned me in her clearcut way, "Major" would be sent away; at any rate I was to desist immediately from all further sledding with him, and I did.

"Major's" end came after I had left the village. He took a violent dislike to the groceryman, and when the latter appeared in the backyard, was wont to snap at the man's heels. Complaint was lodged against him with the police, and one morning the chief came up, and ended "Major's" rheumatism and further earthly struggle with a bullet.

If I loved anything or anybody sincerely, and I think that I did, I loved that dog. He was the first to greet me when I would return home from my travels, and he was usually the last to say good-bye. I hope his spiritual being, if he had one, is enjoying itself, rheumatic-less and surrounded by many friends.

My liking for children, particularly young boys, between three and five, if we can get on together, has developed as my wandering tendencies have died out. In early youth I cannot be said to have been very fond of them. Indeed, I recall a most cruel thing I did to a little baby girl, living near our old brown house. As I

look back over the disgraceful affair now, it seems to me one of the insanest things I ever did; but I have heard another member of my family complain of being similarly tempted at least, when young. The girl was perhaps two or three years old, a chubby little creature with fat, red cheeks, and large blue eyes like saucers. She used to sit every morning in a high chair alone in her mother's bedroom. I was at liberty to roam over this house quite as freely as over our own, and was accustomed to make early morning calls to find out what my friend " Charley's " plans for the day were, and if the coast was clear, to visit the little girl upstairs. Only infrequently was I tempted to make the child cry, but when this temptation came, I would pinch the girl's red cheeks quite hard. At first she would look at me in astonishment, a captivating look of wonder entering her eyes. Another pinch, and still harder. The child's little lips would begin to tremble, and the look of wonder gave way to one of distress. I watched the different facial changes with the same interest that a physician observes a change for the better or worse in his patient. Sometimes it seemed as if I were literally glued to the spot, so fascinating did the child's countenance become. A final pinch of both cheeks severer than either of the other two, and my purpose was achieved, the aggrieved girl giving vent to her pain and sorrow in lusty screams and big, hot round tears. Then I would try to pacify her, usually succeeding, and take my departure, nobody the wiser about it all in spite of the crying. I can only compare this cruel performance on my part, in purpose

and intention at least, to the alleged cannibal feasts which certain African explorers have been accused of ordering and paying for. They obviously wanted to see a human being cooked, served and eaten out of curiosity. A similar motive impelled me to make those early morning calls and pinch that innocent child's cheeks—her velvety skin seemed to me to be made for pinching, and it was interesting to watch her preliminary antics previous to yielding completely to her emotions. I am glad to report that this cruelty was not long practiced by me, and that to-day actual physical suffering in man or beast distresses me very much.

By the time our family had moved into the annex to " Rest Cottage " my younger sister had grown in years and stature so that she made a very acceptable playmate. I recall very distinctly memories of her childhood which show that the spirit of independence was pretty strong in all of us children.

On the first occasion my sister was perhaps six years old. My mother had sentenced her to confine her play to the front and back yards for the day; under no circumstances was she to be seen in the street. I had received a similar punishment.

What was my horror, or what I pretended to be such, to discover " Mame " in the afternoon, well outside the prescribed bounds, hobnobbing unconcernedly with her girl friends as if punishment was something utterly foreign to her life. Pointing my finger scornfully at her, I shouted: " You unexemplified hyena, come back within bounds. You'll get licked to-night."

" Mame " barely deigned to look at me, remarking proudly:

" You don't suppose that I am one of those girls that always mind, do you? "

On the second occasion my mother was at home and able to correct my sister's disobedience instanter. The day before, without a word of counsel with my mother, " Mame " had gone to her particular girl friends, perhaps twenty in number, and invited them to a party at our house, a party which existed solely in her imagination. At the appointed hour, on the day following, the children began to appear in their best clothes, asking naturally for their young hostess. It did not take my mother long to find out the truth, but she bided her time until all the guests had arrived. Then, my sister being forced to be present, the young ladies were told that " Mame " had invited them to something which did not exist, and, although she was very sorry, she would have to send them away with that explanation. A severer rebuke to " Mame " could not have been administered, and the party escapade was one of the very few disobediences I remember her being connected with. She was without doubt the most tractable and well-behaved member of our quartette.

I shall never forget her conduct at my grandfather's —my mother's father—deathbed. An uncle had come to " Rest Cottage," warning us that grandfather was dying, and telling us to go over to the sickroom where grandmother and many of the other relatives were gathered. " Mame " and I took rear seats, on a doorstep,

if I recall correctly. My grandfather was unconscious, and his sweet wife, my mother's mother, an invalid, sat in her rolling chair, watching her mate and father of her children, dying, the most lovely embodiment of resignation and desire " that God's will be done," that I can recall having seen. Of course, the women and children were sobbing, and " Mame " and I joined them. Pretty soon, I noticed that there was a lull in the sobbing—my grandfather had breathed his last and his suffering was over—but " Mame " had not noticed it, and continued to cry pretty noisily. " Let up, Mame," she claims that I whispered to her. " The others have stopped." I don't remember making this observation and advising " Mame " about it, but no doubt I did, for " Mame " was nothing if not honest.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY COLLEGE DAYS

IN the foregoing chapters I have tried to give some idea of the kind of boy I was, say by the time I had reached my fifteenth year, or the calendar year 1884. There is no use denying that such wickedness as I displayed was due more to willful waywardness than to hereditary influences. Consequently, I have always felt justified in replying to a distant cousin as I did when she took me to task for making so much trouble and causing my family such anxiety.

"Can you imagine yourself doing such dreadful things when you get your senses back and are able to think clearly?" was the way her question was worded. My reply was: "In my senses or out of them, I certainly can't imagine any one else as having done them." And I can truthfully say that, as a boy, I was very little given to trying to shift the blame for my sins on other boys. I was not a "squealer," although I was an expert fibster when necessity seemed to call for a lie in place of the plain, unvarnished truth.

In the spring or early autumn of 1884 my mother and sisters went to Europe, and I was sent to a small Illinois college. The village home was broken up and

for better or for worse, the five of us, in the years that were to follow, were to be either voluntary exiles abroad, or travelers at home or in foreign parts. Since that final break-up our complete family has never again been gathered together under one and the same roof.

In spite of a manly effort to overcome them, two traits dogged my steps to college as persistently as they had troubled me at home—the love of the tempting Beyond, and an alarming uncertainty in my mind about the meaning of the Law of Mine and Thine. It was going to take several wearisome and painful years yet before I was to become master of these miserable qualities. They were the worst pieces of baggage I took away with me. My better traits, as I recall them, were willingness and eagerness to learn when I was not under the spell of *Die Ferne,* a fair amount of receptivity in acquiring useful facts and information, and for most of the time a tractable well-weaning, amenable boy disposition. All of these good qualities were scattered to the four winds, however, when the call became irresistible. I stood to win as a student, if love for distant fields could be kept under control. Otherwise there was no telling what I might become or do. Under these circumstances I began my collegiate career in a denominational college in the western part of Illinois. My mother, of course, hoped for the best; and at the time of her departure it looked as if I had definitely struck the right road at last.

I remained for a little over two years at college advancing with conditions to my sophomore year. I paid for my board and lodging by " chore " work in a

lawyer's home in the town, so that the expenses my mother had to meet were comparatively light. The studies that seemed to suit me best were history, historical geography and modern languages. Mathematics and Greek and Latin were tiresome subjects in which I made barely average progress. Mathematics were a snare and a delusion to me throughout my school and college life in America. I mean sometime to pick up my old arithmetic again and see whether maturer years may have given me a clearer insight into the examples and problems that formerly gave me so much trouble.

History, Geography and German, interested me from the start, and I usually stood well in these classes. History took hold of me just as biography did, and I used to read long and late such works as Motley's " Dutch Republic," Bancroft's " History of the United States," Prescott's books on Mexico and South America, and an interesting autobiography or biography was often more appealing to me than a novel or story. Indeed, I read very little fiction during the time I was at college, preferring to pore over an old geography and map out routes of travel to be enjoyed when I had made enough money to undertake them as legitimate enterprises, or, perhaps, as a hired explorer, whose services commanded remunerative prices. For a while the ambition to be a lawyer struggled with my traveling intentions, and I seriously considered taking a course in law in my benefactor's library and office when my academic course should be finished; but this resolve never came to anything because my academic studies were never finished.

For two years, and more, I had struggled as hard as any of my fellow students to support myself, keep up with my class, and probably harder than most of them to be " on the level," and above all things not to let *Die Ferne* entice me away from my new home and pleasant surroundings. Many and many a time *Die Ferne* would whistle one of her seductive signals, and it was all I could do to conquer the desire to go and answer it in person; but my studies, the work at home, and pleasant companions helped me to resist the temptation, and, as I have said, for about two years I attended strictly to business, hearing *Die Ferne* calling, from time to time, but closing my ears to the enticing invitation.

My undoing at college had a most innocent beginning, as was the case with so many of my truancies. Often as not the impulse which drove me to the Open Road was, taken by itself, as laudable and worth while as many of those other impulses which inhibited runaway trips. My ambition, for instance, to go to some distant town, make my own way as a breadwinner and student, and eventually become well-to-do and respected, was in essentials a praiseworthy desire; but the trouble was that I insisted that no one should hear from me or know about my progress until I had really " arrived," as it were. I always demanded that the thing be done secretly, and only as secrecy was an assured factor did such a runaway project really appeal to me.

What broke up my college career, and eventually impelled me to vamose was a simple trial contest of essayists in the literary society of which I was a member.

The winner in the contest stood a fair chance of being chosen by his society to compete with the essayist of the rival society in a general literary contest in the opera house; this was really the event of its kind of the year. I was selected, along with two others, to try my skill as an essayist in the preliminary family bout. Our society was divided into two closely allied cliques, I belonging to the " Wash B " coterie, and the most formidable contestant that I had to meet, being connected with the " Camelites," as we used to call them. These two really hostile camps made the society at election time and on occasions when contestants for the preliminary and opera house contests were to be chosen, literally a wrangling, backbiting and jealous collection of schemers and wire-pullers. The " Wash B " set had all they could do to secure for me the place in the preliminaries, which would doubtless determine the selection for the real contest later on between the two distant societies. But chosen I was, and for six weeks every spare hour that I had was religiously devoted to that wonderful essay. I forget the title of it now, but the matter dealt tritely enough, I make no doubt, with the time-worn subject—" The Western March of Empire." The writing finished, " Wash B " himself took me in hand, and for another month drilled me in delivery, enunciation and gesture. My room-mate, when the drilling was over, said that I was a perfect understudy of " Wash B," who was considered at the time the finest reader our society, and the entire college in fact, contained. This criticism naturally set me up a good deal

and I began seriously to entertain thoughts of winning the prize, a small financial consideration. At last the fatal night arrived, and we three contestants marched to our seats on the platform. In front of us were the three judges, formidable looking men they seemed at the time, although I knew them all as mild-mannered citizens of the town with whom I had often had a pleasant chat. A neutral—one who was neither a " Wash B " nor a " Camelite "—was the first to stand up and read his essay. As I recall the reading and subject matter of this first effort I remember that I thought that I had it beaten to a standstill if I could only retain all the fine inflections and mild gentle gestures which " Wash B " had been at such pains to drill into me. I was second, and stood up, bowed, and, as friends afterwards told me, so far as delivery was concerned I was " Wash B " from start to finish. The third man, an uncouth fellow, but endowed with a wonderfully modulated voice —he was really an orator—then got up and read almost faultlessly so far as intonation and correct and timely emphasis were concerned, a dull paper on Trade Unionism. This student was the one I particularly feared, but when he was through and the three of us took our places in the audience so many " Wash B's " told me that I had won hands down, as they put it, that I gradually came to believe that I had acquitted myself remarkably well. The judges, however, were the men to give the real decision, and they thought so little of my effort that I was placed last on the list—even the neutral with practically no delivery had beaten me. Later he came

to me and said that he never expected to take second place. The uncouth " Camelite " with the banal paper, but wonderful voice, carried the day, and was declared winner of the prize. My chagrin and disappointment seemed tremendous for the moment, and the fact that a number of " Camelites " came to me and said that I ought to have been given the prize did not tend to lessen the poignancy of the grief I felt, but managed to conceal until I was well within the four walls of my room. There I vowed that never, never again would I submit an essay of mine to the whims of three men, who, in my judgment, were such numbskulls that they let themselves be carried away by a mere voice. " They never stopped to consider the subject matter of our essays at all," I stormed, and for days I was a very moody young man about the house. The " Wash B's " tried to console me by promising to elect me essayist for the grand contest in the opera house in the autumn, but although I deigned reconciliation with my defeat, the truth was that I was brooding very seriously over this momentous failure as it seemed to me. I shunned my former boon companions, and was seen very little on the campus. The defeat had eaten into my soul much more deeply than even I at first imagined possible, and as the days went by, a deep laid plot for a runaway trip began to take form and substance. As soon as I realized what was going on I struggled hard to drive the plan out of my head, but while I had been mourning over my failure as an essayist and particularly as a " Wash B " essayist, the subtle, sneaking scheme had wormed its way into

my very sub-consciousness, and before I knew it I was entertaining the tempter in no inhospitable manner. After all, it was a consolation to know that at a pinch I could throw over the whole college curriculum, if necessary, and quietly vamose and, perhaps, begin again in some other institution where my crude, but by me highly prized, literary productions would receive fairer treatment. I had a feeling that a runaway trip would be the end of my college career, and there were influences that struggled hard to hold me back; I have often wondered what my later life would have been had they prevailed. Never before had I been so near a complete victory over *Die Ferne,* and never before had I felt myself the responsible citizen in the community that my college life and self-supporting abilities helped to make me. Then, too, my good friend and counselor, the lawyer, was a man who had made a very great impression on me—an achievement by no means easy in those days of rebellion and willful independence. I knew about the hard fight that he had made in life before I went to his home. He had often visited in our home, and I had been much impressed with his set, cleancut countenance. Some would have called it hard unless they knew the man and what he had been through. I studied it with particular interest, because I knew that every now and then I also struggled hard to do right, and I wondered whether my face after complete mastery of myself, if this should ever come to pass, would some day take on the terrible look of determination and victory which was so often present in that of the lawyer.

All of his victories I cannot report upon, because there must have been many, very many, of a minor character, that he had to work for every day of his life. But the one that took him out of the gutter, and gave him strength to quit, at one and the same time, over-indulgence in liquor and the tobacco habit, was *the* one that took hold of me, although I hardly knew what whisky tasted like myself and was only intermittently a user of tobacco. The fact that the man had overcome these habits by sheer will-power, "without getting religion," as had often been told me, was what took hold of my sense of wonder. Both in my home, and in the lawyer's, so far as his good wife was concerned, I had been taught to believe, or, at any rate, had come partially to believe, that all such moral victories, indeed, that all conquests over one's rebellious self, had to come through prayer and Divine assistance, or not at all. I had never wholly accepted this doctrine, although it probably had a stronger hold on me than I knew. But the lawyer—ah, ha! here was at last a living, breathing witness to the fact that prayer and Divine help were not indispensable in gathering oneself together, putting evil habits aside, and amounting to something in the world. I did not say anything about the discovery I had made; but I studied my hero closely, and treasured highly all facts and fancies which rather intimate contact with him called forth, and which substantiated the original and primal fact—*i.e.*, that will-power and not "conversion" had made him one of the noted citizens of his community and one of the prominent lawyers of his State.

I do not know whether he knew in what great respect I held him or not. This much is certain, however; he almost never looked at or spoke to me severely, and he was constantly doing something kind or useful. I wish now that I had been old enough to have had a square talk with him about will-power and Divine help. He was not a very communicative man, and it is possible that he would not have consented to enter into such an interview, thinking perhaps that I was too young to discuss such matters from his point of view. So I lived on, looking up invariably to him as an example when it was necessary to grit my teeth and overcome some slight temptation. His wife, who was really a second mother to me, saw to it that I attended church and studied my Bible—the college authorities demanded attendance at church, and on Mondays called the roll of all those who had or had not been present at church the day before—but somehow she never had the influence over me that her white-haired, clean-shaven stalwart husband did. It was her constant prayer and hope that " Gill," as she called him, would eventually get religion and be assured of heavenly peace. He frequently attended church with her, and certainly his efforts were as exemplary as the college president's, but I have heard it said that, if he believed in any theology at all, it was in that miserable, foolish doctrine—silly creation of weak minds —that a certain number of souls are predestined to damnation anyhow, and that his was one of them on account of the wild life he had led in his younger manhood. This " story " about my hero also took hold of

me very perceptibly, and I often used to look at the man's fine face surreptitiously, and wonder what could be going on in a mind that had become resigned to eternal punishment. I could not follow him this far in his philosophy, but I have long since come to the conclusion that the man was too sensible to entertain any such theory, and that the " story " was the mere patchwork of a number of wild guesses and injudicious surmises on the part of relatives, and his lovable, but not always careful, wife.

One day, a relative of mine, known as " The Deacon," came to the town at my hostess's request, and held some revival meetings, or, perhaps, they were called consecration meetings. " The Deacon," although an ardent Methodist, I believe, and a determined striver for the salvation of men's souls, was not one of the conventional boisterous revivalists whom we all have seen and heard. He was quiet and retiring in his manner, and seemed to rely on the sweet reasonableness of the Bible and his interpretation of it to convince men of the need of salvation, rather than on loud exhortation and still louder singing. He was very deaf, and when I called him for breakfast, mornings, I had to go into his room and shake him, when he would put his trumpet to his ear and ask " what was up." I would tell him that it was time for him to be up, and he would thank me in that strange metallic voice which so many deaf people have, or acquire.

He spent much of his time talking with his hostess, and, one morning, rather injudiciously, I think, he told

her of a friend of his, "just your own husband's size, weight and years," who had suddenly dropped dead in Chicago. This incident took hold of the good woman in an unfortunate way, and when I saw her, she had been crying, and was bewailing the fact that her "Gill" might also drop off suddenly before getting religion. There was nothing that I could say beyond the fact that he seemed to me good enough to drop off at any time; but with this his wife was not to be consoled. "Gill must give himself up to God," she persisted, and I retreated, feeling rather guilty on these lines myself, as I was not at all sure that I had given myself up to God, or would ever be able to. He was such a myth to me, that I found it far more practicable to study the character and ways of the lawyer whom I knew as a visible, tangible living being.

It may be that my adoration for my benefactor—I really think it amounted to that—was not the best influence that might have been exercised over my mind; it has been suggested to me in later years, for instance, that it was probably at this time that I laid the foundation for that firm belief in will-power, which, for better or for worse, has been about all that I have believed in seriously as a moral dynamic for a number of years. Be this as it may, for years after leaving college and the lawyer's home, my recollection of him, of his brave fight to do right, and of the friendly interest he took in me, contributed more than once to help tide me over a spell when *Die Ferne* was doing her utmost to persuade me to throw over everything and chase foolishly after her.

Now, that the good man is gone, I regret more than ever that I allowed that miserable essay contest to stampede me as it did. The first departure from college and the lawyer's home was a failure. I halted foolishly an entire day at a town not far from the college, and the lawyer, suspecting that I might do this, sent on two of my college friends—older than I was—to scout about and try and locate me. They succeeded in their mission—one of them was the noted "Wash B," who had tried so hard to teach me how to read an essay. They did their utmost to persuade me to return, but I was obdurate, and they went back without me. In an hour or two the lawyer himself appeared on the scene, and then I had to go back and knew it. He said very little to me, beyond asking me to give to him such funds as I possessed. In the afternoon he called on a brother lawyer who, as I could judge from the conversation, was in some serious legal difficulty. When we were in the street again my captor said: "Josiah, there is a man who is going to the penitentiary." He spoke very slowly and impressively, but did not offer to tell me why the man was going to be shut up or when, and I was sensible enough not to ask.

Returned to our home the lawyer made no reference to my unconventional leave-taking, and apparently considered the matter closed. It was decided, for the sake of my feelings, that I should not return immediately to college, and I hugged my room as much as possible, anxious to keep out of sight of my classmates, who, I felt sure, knew all about my escapade. There I brooded

again over my poor success as an essayist, my lack of will-power to bear up under defeat, and I also tried to plan out another escape from what seemed to me a terrible disgrace. One afternoon, when I was particularly gloomy, the fat, cheerful president of the college knocked at my door. He had come to have a heart-to-heart talk with me, I learned, and I was soon on the defensive. He laughed at my bashfulness about going back into college, pooh-poohed my assertion that I was "no good anyhow and might better be let go," and in general did his utmost to cheer me up and make the "slipping back" into my classes, as he put it, as simple and easy as could be. But, good man, he labored with me in vain. The next day, some funds coming to hand, I was off again, for good and all. The well-meaning president has long since gone to his final rest. The following morning I was in Chicago, and very soon after in my grandmother's home. *Die Ferne* was only indirectly to blame for this trip because I made for the only home I had as soon as I decamped from college, refusing to be lured away into by-paths. *Die Ferne* was only in so far to blame that she originally suggested the desertion of my studies, offering no suggestions that I paid any attention to, about an objective. I—poor, weak mortal—was terribly to blame in throwing away, after two years' straight living, the chance that was offered me to complete my college course, and later to go and become a lawyer. And yet—balancing what was considered a golden opportunity at the time, against the hard school of experience it has since been my lot to go

through, and what the teaching that I have had means to me now, I confess to a leaning in favor of the hard knocks and trials and tribulations of the road as the more thorough curriculum for me at the time of life they were endured, than would have been the college course and a lawyer's shingle. It is difficult, of course, to decide in such matters, but somehow I think that the world means more to me in every way to-day, in spite of what I have pulled out of, than it ever could have meant on set academic and professional lines.

The stay in the home village was not a prolonged one, long enough, however, to ponder over the change in my life which I had so domineeringly brought about—to go back to college was out of the question, and the lawyer did not want me back. My capriciousness had exhausted his patience, and he frankly said that he washed his hands of the "case." To remain in the home village was also out of the question, according to my aunt. It was there that I had first shown my dare-devil proclivities, and in her opinion it was best to get me as far away from former village associations as possible. Besides, it was not thought wise to have me in the care of my aging grandmother, who could only incidentally keep track of me.

I wondered myself what was best to do, not caring for another runaway trip right away, and temporarily regretting very much that I had been so silly over that picayune essay. There was nothing I could think of that seemed feasible, and it was just as well that I did not lose my head over some personally cherished plan,

because my resourceful aunt had already found an asylum for me. It was a farm in western Pennsylvania, owned by some distant relatives. Here I was to help care for crops and stock, and see what living in the open would do for my over-imaginative head. I was to receive my board and twenty-five dollars for the season's work, a huge sum it seemed to me when first mentioned, for I never before had possessed such wealth in actual cash. I went to work with zeal, and determination to learn all I could about farming. For a number of weeks all went well, in fact, until I made an excursion with an older friend and his fiancée, and a girl, who was the first, I believe, that I thought I really liked. I never told her name to my family, beyond calling her "Jeminy Jowles," which was as much a real name as mine was. For some reason, for years after this temporary attachment, which on my part, at least, was genuine and spontaneous, I never wanted my family to know that I was interested in any particular young lady, and as I told above, I feigned indifference to nearly all girls rather than be thought "teched" with admiration for any one or two. After our return from our outing, "Jeminy" returned to the lake to help take care of one of the villas there, as a number of girls did at that time, and are doing now, I have no doubt. "Jeminy's" departure made the village very dull for me, and the farm absolutely distasteful. So, one day, I asked my cousin to give me what he thought was my due, out of the promised twenty-five dollars. I told him that I was going to New York State to see if I could earn

more money. He knew about " Jeminy " being there, and as he thought that something profitable might develop out of our friendship, I was given my money and then hied away to the New York resorts, and " Jeminy." The latter had to work so hard all day and well on into the evening that I saw very little of her, but I remember dreaming and thinking about her, when I had to wander about alone. I spent very little time in looking for a job on account of my moving, and before long I determined to look elsewhere for work. What was my chagrin, when returning on the day that the faithless " Jeminy " was about to depart for her home, to see her coming down the wharf from the boat with a former admirer, clothed in fine raiment, whom I had ousted in " Jeminy's " affections in the little farming village in Pennsylvania. I surmised him to be possessed of a fat bank-roll, judging by his independence and " only board in this sidewalk " manner of appropriating " Jeminy " for his very own, and of his giving me a very distant and critical look, which my somewhat worn clothes no doubt deserved. That was the end of my first and last real love affair. Jilted, funds very low, and no employment in sight—here was a situation worthy of any boy's best mettle. Perhaps the jilting hurt worse for the time being, but the necessity of replenishing my funds helped me to forget it somewhat. By rights I should have returned to Pennsylvania and gone to work again on my relative's farm. But there I should have seen the faithless " Jeminy," perhaps her old admirer as well, and I was in no mood for such encounters. No! I was not

going to allow the village to make fun of me, even if I starved elsewhere. Besides, what chance would my old clothes have in a competitive contest with those of my rival? Obviously a very slim one. Fate was temporarily against me in that direction, I was sure, and I cast my eyes toward the north—probably because " Jeminy " and the farm meant south. The west did not attract me just then, and the east—New York constituted the greater part of the east to me in those days—seemed too complicated and full of people.

One night I " hopped " a freight train bound for Buffalo, and secluded myself among some Standard Oil Company's barrels in a box-car. In a wreck I should probably have come to grief in the midst of all that oil, but no wreck had been scheduled for that ride. My possessions consisted of what I had on my back and a few nickels in my pocket. In this fashion I hoped to impress the mighty north. That old dream about disappearing from the view of friends, making my way alone in the world, and then returning independent, successful and well-to-do, buoyed me up, even when " Jeminy's " desertion of me was most tantalizing.

I finally fell asleep on top of the mighty Trust's property, to dream of honest efforts to succeed, if not of wonderful triumphs. At heart I desired that the realization of my dream of future prosperity and fame should come through honorable toil and struggle. Indeed, during this period of youth, and even earlier, I cannot recall any disappearance or runaway trip on my part which did not presuppose a " square deal " in my account with

the world; theoretically, at any rate, honesty was as dear an asset to me as to the boys who staid at home and were regular. That sitting on the mighty Trust's barrels and "hooking" a ride in a car which had been chartered and paid for by others was not a "square deal" did not occur to me. And to deliver myself of a confession on this score once and for all, I can say that I have never had any serious pricks of conscience on this account. There is no defense to offer for such obtuseness, any more than there was for my using half-fare tickets, when I had the wherewithal to buy them, until I was over seventeen. I merely report the fact as symptomatic of all passengers, good, bad and indifferent, who "beat" their way on our railroads. I have read of a "freak" who notified a railroad company that he had stolen a certain number of rides on its trains, estimating the probable cost of tickets for the computed mileage, and enclosing a post-office order for a small amount of the entire sum, as his preliminary payment in making good. Perhaps this man actually existed, but it is more likely than not that he was either a reporter's invention or, if real, that he merely tantalized the railroad company with a statement of his indebtedness, omitting to enclose the post-office order. No "hang-out" gathering of hoboes would ever believe such a yarn—not even about a "gay-cat."

My freight train stopped very early in the morning in the railroad yards at East Buffalo, and there I got out. Stumbling over tracks and dodging switch engines, I made my way to what turned out to be the yardmas-

ter's headquarters; his office was upstairs in the dingy wooden building, while below was a warm room where switchmen could rest. It was a cold September morning, the sun not yet up, and that warm room looked very inviting. I finally screwed up enough courage to enter, and I found myself all alone. Switchmen came in later, but they barely noticed me until I excused my bold entrance, and frankly confessed that I was looking for work. My clothes—they were not good enough to court "Jeminy" in, but never mind! They saved the day or the situation in that shanty. It was plain to the switchmen that I was not a tramp, and my subdued manners evidently made a good impression also. Later the night yardmaster, a jovial German, came in and learned of my plight. He looked me over carefully, quizzed me rather minutely about my last job and my travels, and finally told me to make myself comfortable near the fire until quitting time, when he promised to have another talk with me. That second talk was the beginning of a series of mishaps, which, could the good yardmaster have foreseen them, would certainly have made him hesitate before securing for me the position which his influence enabled him to do. The mishaps will be described later on, but I must refer to them here on account of that second interview with the German. Whatever else we may or may not wonder about in life, it has always seemed to me interesting to speculate about what might have happened to us of a momentous nature had certain very trivial and insignificant circumstances in earlier life only been different. How many men and women, for

instance, on looking back over their lives, discover just such slight events in their early careers, and realize, long years after, how important these events were, after all. Only the other day I made the acquaintance of a man, now a resident of Hawaii, who explains his present success and permanent home there by a much-advertised eruption of a local volcano. He was a poorly paid telegraph operator in Oregon at the time of the eruption, which occurred just as he was thinking about what to do with his vacation. He finally decided to see the volcano, even if it cost him all his savings, and off to Hawaii he sailed—and there he stayed. Opportunity after opportunity came to him, and he had succeeded. Why? The man says, "On account of that derned old spouter." *Qui lo sa?*

What would have happened later if that yardmaster had not looked me up again and put me through another series of questions I, of course, cannot say. But it is easily possible that something very different from what I have to report upon in Part Second might have happened. The immediate result of that second interview with the yardmaster was that he promised me a position as "yard car reporter," and took me into his own home at the very cheap rate of $15.00 a month for board and lodging, there remaining for me to save or spend, as I saw fit, $20.00 out of the $35.00 which was my monthly stipend—a princely sum I thought, at the time, not exceeded in its wonderful effect as a salary, until years after, when $300.00 a week, for two months or so, once again gave me more or less the same inflated sense of joy which

the $35.00 a month had formerly also been able to achieve.

The car reporting proved more difficult for me than the yardmaster had anticipated. First of all I had to learn the names and location of all the different tracks in the yards at East Buffalo. I studied them mainly at night, because this was when I was on duty. It ought to be stated immediately that I never mastered their geography or nomenclature satisfactorily, and that my reports about the numbers and ownership of the cars were very faulty. As I recall these reports to-day I fear that officially I sent many a car out of the yards that remained at home, and that I unintentionally reported as safe in port an equal number of cars that, for aught I know, may to this day be wandering about aimlessly over the prairies. However, I was not to hold this position long, so no great damage was done, I hope.

Writing about my early years and bidding good-bye to them here in print has been a harder task than I expected. Bidding good-bye to them formally and physically years ago was not difficult. To reach twenty-one, then thirty, then—I always looked on thirty as a satisfying goal, the years seemed to come and go so slowly. Then, too, I realized, after a fashion, that my youth was considered pretty much of a fiasco, and I wanted to get just as far away from failure and disaster as possible. Now—well, perhaps it is better that I keep my thoughts to myself. I will say, however, that retrospection can bring with it some of the most mournful hours the mind has to wallow in.

CHAPTER V

MY FIRST IMPRISONMENT

A FRIEND, on receiving word that this book was being written, and that it was intended as a wind-up, for the time being at least, of my Under World reportings, wrote to me as follows:

"Whatever else you do or don't do, don't forget to get some romance into the story. I mean that you should try to get some poetry—oh, yes, I mean poetry—into your account of yourself. Merely a string of dates and facts will not go."

Perhaps the reader may be able to find some scattered bits of intended "poetry" in this Second Part, but on looking it over myself the "bits," if they exist at all, are so widely scattered that I cannot locate them. Yet I had to write this section of the book to make it coherent and connected, "poetry" or no "poetry."

My car reporting in East Buffalo lasted just a week. Then my benefactor, the night yardmaster, and I went to Buffalo proper one day. The yardmaster soon found other friends and, telling me to amuse myself, left me to my own devices. Perhaps, if we had remained together this second part of my book would tell a very different story than it does, perhaps— But something

in me says: "What is the use of 'perhapsing' at this late hour? Go ahead and blurt out the truth." I am not sure that there is much use in "perhapsing," but somehow it seems impossible for me to throw off the habit. At times it is so strong that I have caught myself going back to my lodging three times to make certain that no coals had fallen out of the grate—when there was no more probability of such a thing happening on the third inspection than on the first. "And yet," I have reasoned, "*perhaps* a live coal might have fallen out and burned up the whole place had I not taken a last look and made sure."

So it is in looking back to that day alone in Buffalo—the inevitable *perhaps* comes to my mind, and I wonder what would have happened if I had simply staid with the yardmaster, which I was very welcome to do had I been so minded.

What I did during the morning and early afternoon I do not recall now; probably I merely wandered about the streets and took in such sights as attracted me. Of this much, however, I feel certain: there was no great *Wanderlust* in my intentions. My work on the railroad interested me not a little, and I had already begun to calculate the amount of savings I should have at the end of the year. As the day wore on I remember measuring how much time I should need to get back to supper and work, and up to the middle of the afternoon it was my firm determination to report for work early. Then—ah yes, then! I saw a horse and buggy standing idle in one of the main thoroughfares. What it

was that prompted me to get into the buggy and drive blindly onward I cannot say, even now. As I have remarked, my job was satisfactory, I was my own "boss" in the daytime, the horse and buggy no more represented personal wealth to me at the time than did one of the stores, and there was no reasonable excuse for a wandering trip. But something, strict church people might say the devil, prompted me to throw over the job, run the risk of being sent to prison as a horse thief, and to ride away with buggy and horse for parts unknown. There is no wish on my part to palliate this crime in the least; I merely want to know why I committed it. At the moment of driving away it no more occurred to me to turn the outfit into gold than it did to turn back. On I went for a good hour, regardless of direction and the police. Then the seriousness of my offense gradually began to dawn on me. What should I do? At first I contemplated leaving the horse with some farmer, thinking that its owner would eventually locate it. But I threw over this plan. It was too late to report for work, and the growing darkness brought on a mild attack of *Wanderlust.* "Why not proceed as far as possible under the cover of night," I reasoned, "and *then* leave the rig somewhere in good hands?" I had at last found a road going in the direction I desired at that time to follow, if the car-reporting job was to be given up, and my mind was pretty definitely settled on that score, although a week's wages were due me.

Midnight found me on still another road, and going

in a new direction, my mind having changed during the ride. I put the horse into a barn, fed him, and then we both fell asleep. Early morning found us *en route* again, and no police in sight. By this time the desire to elude capture was very strong, and the wonder is that I succeeded with detectives by the half dozen beating the bushes in various directions. The third day out I reached my destination in Pennsylvania, the home of an acquaintance who dealt in horses and knew me well. My possession of such a valuable horse and fashionable phæton carriage was satisfactorily explained; they were bought at auction, I boldly declared, and represented the result of my savings during the summer. To make a miserable story short, I will merely say that the horse and buggy were turned over to my friend for a money consideration, quite satisfactory to me, but far below what the outfit was worth. It might still be where I parted with it, so far as the astute "detectives" were concerned. It was voluntarily returned to the owner before long. Several weeks later another horse and buggy in my custody arrived at my friend's house, and again the flimsy tale of a "bargain" and inability to resist it was told. It was the silliest "bargain" I ever went in for. Having attended a fair in a neighboring town, not over ten miles away, and having lost my train home, I boldly appropriated a "rig" and drove home in the most unconcerned fashion possible. My credulous friend complimented me on my luck in buying horses, and would no doubt have bought this second outfit from me had something not happened.

About midnight an ominous knock was heard on my friend's outer door. As I felt must be the case, it heralded the arrival of the constables—the horse had been seen and located! There was a bare chance of escape, but as I look back on the situation now the probability is that I should not have got far away before being captured. Some of the villagers, who had also been aroused, were much incensed at my arrest and forced departure, declaring that " no boy in his senses would intentionally steal a horse so near home. There must be some mistake. Probably the boy had mistaken the rig for one that he had been told to get, etc., etc." But their arguments availed nothing, and I was taken away. The committing magistrate made quick work with my story in the lockup, and soon I was lodged in the county jail—my second imprisonment in about eighteen years. (I looked, perhaps, fifteen.)

Die Ferne, everything in fact that I had ever really cared for, seemed irretrievably lost. Yet no tears came to my eyes, and I walked into the miserable " hall " of the jail, said " Hello! " to the other prisoners, as if such a place and companions were what I had always been accustomed to. This ability, if I may call it such, to get along with almost everybody, and for a reasonable amount of time to put up with practically any kind of accommodations has been of great service to me. I notice, however, that in later years " home comforts " are becoming more and more a necessity. My constitution seems to demand a *quid pro quo*—and wants fair treatment after patiently enduring so many hard knocks.

This first *real* imprisonment and the jail deserve a minute description.

A number of years ago I contributed to *The Forum* an article, entitled "The Criminal in the Open." The main thesis supported in this paper was that criminologists had previously been studying the criminal within too narrow bounds—the prison cell; and that to know their man well they must make his acquaintance when free and natural. In general, I still hold to this belief; but on looking back to that first jail experience of mine I am more than ever convinced that as a people, a practical people, too, we are woefully neglecting our duty in continuing the present county jail system with all its accompanying evils; and that it is most distinctly "up to" both criminologist and penalogist to work for radical changes in the present system.

My own experience in that old jail to which I was committed, to wait for trial, is typical of what happens to the average prisoner in most of our jails. The jail building was uncommonly old; but the rules applying therein were about the same that one finds in all *country* jails; in cities the rules are more severe and exacting.

Soon after entering the jail corridor, or hall, as I have called it, one prisoner after another—they were free to roam at will in the corridor until bedtime—accosted me and, directly or indirectly, tried to find out what I had been "sent up for." I told them quite freely about the charge against me, and in turn learned on what charges they had been shut up. There did not happen to be any murderers or violent offenders in the

jail just then, but when found in jails such inmates circulate quite as freely among the possibly innocent as the older prisoners in my jail associated with the young boys. A few of the prisoners were serving jail sentences for minor offences, but the majority, like myself, were waiting for trial. There were burglars, pickpockets, sneak thieves, swindlers, runaway boys, and half-demented men who were awaiting transportation to suitable institutions. In the daytime, from seven in the morning until eight or nine at night, we were all thrown together, for better or for worse, each one to take his chances, in the corridor on the main floor. Here I passed many a dismal hour during the six weeks I had to wait for sentence. At night we were locked in our cells on the tiers above the corridor, two and three men being lodged in one cell. It is only fair to state, however, that the cells were so unusually large and commodious that even four men could have been comfortably lodged in one cell. We were all supposed to keep quiet after the sheriff had locked us in for the night, but in the daytime we were free to play games, laugh and generally amuse ourselves. We cooked our own food. Once a week an election was held, and a new cook was installed; those who knew nothing about cooking were expected to help wash the dishes and keep the corridor clean. There was no work to do beyond these simple duties. It was consequently necessary for us to get exercise in walking, "broomstick calisthenics," as we called our antics with this instrument, and in climbing up and down the stairway. A liberal supply of tobacco was

furnished us every morning, and we also got one or two daily newspapers. Our food was simple, but more or less satisfying: Bread, molasses and coffee for breakfast; meat, potatoes and bread at noon; bread, molasses and tea for supper. Those who had money were permitted to send out and buy such luxuries as butter, sugar and milk. All in all, it was probably one of the "easiest" jails, if the prisoner behaved himself, in the whole United States, and I have nothing to criticise in the humanitarian treatment shown us by the sheriff; the jail itself, however, was an eyesore—unsanitary to the last degree, and pathetically insecure had there been expert jail-breakers in our company.

It was the total absence of classification of prisoners, and the resulting mixing together of hardened criminals and young boys, to which attention is mainly called here. From morning till night the "old hands" in crime were exchanging stories of their exploits, while the younger prisoners sat about them with open mouths and eyes of wonder, greedily taking in every syllable. I listened just as intently as anybody, and was hugely impressed with what I heard and saw. The seriousness of my offense advanced me somewhat in the scale of the youthful prisoners, and at times I was allowed to join a "private" confab, supposed to be only for the long initiated and thoroughly tried offenders. This privilege, and the general tone of "toughness" which was all over the prison, had its effect on me, I am sorry to say, and I began to bluster and bluff with the rest. Indeed, so determined was I to be the "real thing" or

nothing at all—almost entirely the result of association with the older men—that I was at first unwilling that my lawyer should try to secure a reform-school sentence for me. "If I'm to be sentenced at all," I ordered, "let it be to prison proper. I don't want to associate with a lot of kids." Fortunately, my lawyer did not follow my suggestion.

Meanwhile, Sentence Day, that momentous time, which all prisoners await with painful uncertainty, was drawing nigh. Trials, of course, were to come first, but practically every court prisoner knew that he had been caught "with the goods on," and that Sentence Day would claim him for her prey. My trial was soon over. My lawyer had "worked" very adroitly, and I received sentence immediately—*the reform school until I had improved.* I remember feeling very sheepish when I was taken back to the jail; such a sentence was meant for a baby, I thought, and what would the "old hands" think? They came to the door in a body when I was brought back, demanding in a chorus: "How much, Kid?"

"A year," I romanced, meaning, of course, in the penitentiary, and faking an old-timer's smile and nonchalance. Later they were told the truth, and then began a course of instruction about "beating the Ref," escaping, to which I paid very close attention.

A few days later the other trials were finished, and Sentence Day was definitely announced. The men to be sentenced put on their "best" for the occasion, those having a surplus of neckties and shirts kindly sharing

them with those who were short of these decorations. A hard fate stared them all in the face, and each wanted, somehow, to help his neighbor. They were as nervous a collection of men while waiting for the sheriff as one will find in a moon's travel. They all expected something, but the extent of this something, the severity which the " old man," the judge, would show them, was what made them fidgety. It was an entirely new scene to me, and I watched intently the countenance of each prisoner. My medicine had been received; I knew exactly what was ahead of me, and did not suffer the feeling of uncertainty troubling the others. Finally the sheriff came. " All ready, boys," he said, and the convicted men were handcuffed together in pairs and marched over to the courthouse. In a half-hour they had returned, a remarkable look of relief in all of their faces. Some of them had been given stiff sentences, but, as one man put it, " Thank God, I know what my task is anyhow "; the terrible suspense and waiting were over.

The next day we were to be taken to our different destinations, insane asylum and workhouse for some, the " Ref " and " Pen " for others. Breakfast was our last meal together, and the sheriff's wife sent in little delicacies to make us happier. The meal over, our scanty belongings were packed up, each man and boy put on his best, once more, final good-byes were said to those who remained behind, and the march to our new homes began. Some are possibly still trudging to new places of seclusion at the State's request and demand, others have very likely " squared it " and are

now stationary and good citizens, while still others have perhaps " cashed in " here below, and have moved on in spirit to worlds where the days of temptation and punishment are no more. Since the day we left the old, musty jail I have never run across any of my jail companions.

CHAPTER VI

IN A REFORM SCHOOL

IF some one could only tell us exactly what should, and should not, be done in a reform school a great advance would be achieved in penalogy, which at present is about as much of a science as is sociology. Both—and criminology can be thrown in, too—always reminded me of a cat after a good sousing—they are quite as much in earnest in shaking off what does not agree with them, or what they think does not agree with them, as is the cat in drying itself; but again, like the cat, the shaking often seems to make them look more ragged than ever.

The most that I can attempt to do here is to describe the Reform School I learned to know in Pennsylvania, and tell what it accomplished and failed to accomplish in my case.

The superintendent was the brother of one of the most astute politicians and officeholders this country has produced. He held his position largely through his brother's influence, and might just as well have been given any other "job," so far as his particular fitness for public office was concerned. In spite of all this,

however, he was a fairly kind and just man, and probably did right according to his light and leading.

The institution sheltered some three hundred boys and girls, the latter being officially separated from the boys; the "safeties," however, the boys who had the run of the farm, saw not a little of them. The place was arranged on the cottage plan—the boys of a certain *size* being toed off to a certain cottage. For instance, I was placed with lads much younger and far more inexperienced than I was simply because I was their height. It struck me at the time—and I am even more impressed to-day—that this was a very peculiar way of classifying prisoners, particularly boys. Far more important, it seems to me, is a classification based on age, training, experience, disposition and temperament. But the great State which had taken me in charge practically overlooked all of these matters in locating us boys in the different homes. Who was to blame for this I cannot tell, but one would think that the superintendent would have thought out something better than the system we had to live under. Right here is the trouble in so many penal and reformatory institutions—what other superintendents and wardens have found "good enough," their latest successor also finds "good enough"; the wheels and cogs have been kept going on the old basis, and the new-comer is afraid to "monkey" with them during his term of office. Many a prison in this country merits a good overhauling, and while exposure of misuse of public funds is the order of the day, and new blood is being called for

in so many quarters, it might not be a bad plan to examine carefully into the management of our penitentiaries, workhouses, reform schools and jails.

There was no wall around the school to which I had been committed, a fact which I noted immediately on my arrival. In place of a wall, and as supposed safeguards against escapes, the superintendent had a shrieking whistle for both day and night, and a huge, flaming natural gas-light, more particularly for night, although the miserable thing, as I considered it, burned the entire twenty-four hours. There were five divisions, or cottages, for the boys, including the main building, which could hardly be called a cottage. Unless my memory plays me false, I was in Division G, next to that of the "biggest" boys, yet I was considerably older and certainly more traveled and "schooled" than many of the latter. Theoretically each inmate was to remain in the school until twenty-one, unless relatives or friends took him away after he had earned the requisite number of good-conduct marks. Ten was the maximum daily number, and five thousand were required before good conduct was considered established and a release permissible. The day was about equally divided between study and work, but being outclassed for study in Division G, I was allowed to work all day in the brush factory. Punishment was measured according to the offense, sometimes also according to the number of marks a boy had and the proximity of his release. But in general these rules prevailed: For minor offenses, "standing in line"—a sentence involving loss of the

privilege of play and the necessity of toeing a mark with other victims during recesses; for serious offenses, a prescribed number of lashes with a leather strap, a reduction in the boy's marks, and imprisonment in a cell on bread and water. Some boys had long since earned their five thousand marks, and were theoretically—there is so much that is theoretical in *State* institutions—entitled to their freedom. But no relatives, friends or employers coming forward to vouch for their safekeeping "outside," they were compelled to stay on until somebody came to their rescue.

The word "outside" characterized a great deal of the life in the school. Used originally exclusively in penitentiaries, the boys had appropriated the word for their own use as well, although there was no wall, and the "outside" was as plainly visible as the "inside." Under restraint and kept within bounds we certainly were, but it was considered smart and "wise" to use the prison expression. Consequently every boy with any gumption in him was continually thinking about what he would do when free again, when the great "outside" would be open territory once more.

We also had an institutional lingo, or slang, patterned as much as possible after the dialect used by "the real thing," the crooks in the "Pen." Guards became "screws," bread and water "wind pudding," detectives "elbows," and so on. When among ourselves, in shop, schoolroom or at play, aping "the real thing," the crooks, and their mannerisms, or what we took to be such—and nearly all the boys had had preliminary jail

experiences and had associated with crooks—was a constant amusement for all, and with many a serious study. This posing was one of the worst things taught and learned in the school. Originally intended to be very humanitarian and modern in purpose and organization, to be a disciplinary home rather than a mere place of incarceration—witness the absence of a wall and the cottage system of housing—the boys themselves were defeating these ends with their prison conversations, things they had learned at the taxpayers' expense in various county jails.

Speaking generally, the boys were divided into two sets or rings—the "stand-patters" and the "softies." The former were the boys of spirit and adventure, the principal winners in their classes as well as on the playground; the latter were the tale-bearers, the mouthy ones—"lungers" was also a good name for them—who split on the "stand-patters" when "lunging it" promised to gain favors for them. Whatever else I did or did not do while in the school, I fought very shy of all officers who tried to get me to "peach" on my companions. This may not have been a virtue, but it secured good standing for me among the boys of spirit and enterprise, and I think that any boy wanting agreeable companionship in such a place would naturally turn to the "stand-patters." Of course, my selection of cronies was watched by the officers and made a mental note of to be used later on, either for or against my record, as it suited the purposes of the observing overseer, as were many other things that I did or failed to

do. In general the officers were fair-minded and reasonable, but thinking them over now, with the exception of one or two, they were not particularly adapted for reform-school work; they were mainly men who had drifted into the life accidentally, and had clung to it for want of something better to do. They were judged by the boys according to their varying abilities in wielding the strap. Some were strong and heavy, and were called "sockdologers"; others, not so effective physically, were dubbed "lightweights." At night we slept in dormitories, leaving all our clothes except our shirts in the basement, an arrangement which made night escapes difficult. In the main the dormitory life was clean and correct, indeed very much cleaner than cell life in many of our prisons and jails. The daily programme, as I recall it now, began at five-thirty in the morning in summer and at six in the winter. The great whistle started the day, and we all had to jump out of our beds, make them, and then in single file march to the basement, where we washed and dressed. Soon after came the molasses-and-tea breakfast, after which we had a half-hour or so on the playground. Recreation over, we were toed off into two squads, one for the schoolroom and the other for the factory. There were also "detail" boys, inmates of long standing who could be trusted as messengers, in the bakery, plumbing shop, and at different occupations in the cottages and on the farm. I made a bold and early bid for a "detail" job, but with no success. The superintendent told me that only those boys of whom he was sure received such posi-

tions, and I retired with the knowledge that he was not sure of me, and the determination to make him keep on guessing about me indefinitely. At noon sharp, came dinner, followed by another half-hour of recreation, when school and factory started again. Six o'clock saw us all at supper, and nine in bed, the intervening time being spent in the playground and in the school-room.

One day there was a revolution in the factory. One of the older boys had thrown a wrench at a brow-beating guard, and had been well beaten for his disobedience—beaten and hit with the man's fist, the boy claimed. At recess there was a hurried consultation among the "stand-patters."

"Let's hike it to the Super's office and complain," some one suggested, and before we had half seriously considered what we were doing, away we scampered to the superintendent's office in the main building, the officer to be complained about following leisurely after us. It was as clear a case of mob insanity as I have ever seen; the battered and bloody face of our companion so incensed us that rules and regulations were thrown to the winds. Indeed, if all of us had kept on going, so fleet were our feet, probably half could have gotten away for keeps then and there. But escape was not in our minds. We wanted, and were going to demand, if possible, the dismissal of the overbearing guard. At first, as is the case with nearly all mobs, the various boys wanted to talk at once, and the superintendent had considerable difficulty in getting our side

of the story. We were then ordered to the schoolroom of our division, the superintendent desiring to interview the guard alone. The upshot of the affair was that the guard resigned and each boy received fifteen lashes with the strap. The superintendent personally attended the thrashing. Our first officer, a mild-mannered, much bewhiskered man, who had always treated me very considerately, was the first to wield the strap. We boys sat in our seats with folded arms, awaiting our turns. Finally mine came. The officer looked at me disappointedly; he did not seem to want to punish me. He had to obey orders, however, just as we boys did, and I received my fifteen lashes. During each "whaling" the other victims looked on intently, like children about to sit down at a Thanksgiving dinner; they wanted to see if the "whaled" one would "squeal." Excepting a more or less half-witted lad, who had run with the rest of us for no other reason than that he "saw us going and thought we were playing follow the leader," none of us whimpered. The first officer gave out completely after ten boys had been punished, and a substitute—the school carpenter—took his place. I remember how glad I was that my turn came under the first officer's régime, and when he had begun to wobble.

Although the much-disliked factory guard had disappeared, the revolt and "whaling" set the escape thoughts going in the minds of four boys at a very much accelerated speed. Such thoughts are always on top, as it were, wherever human beings are shut up—even in

hospitals; but the four lads—I was one of them—put their heads together, and plotted as never before. A fight, and a subsequent order to stand " in line," sent my desire for freedom soaring uncommonly high. One of the " softies " and I had clashed for some reason or other, and a " whaling " at night, besides " standing in line," stared us in the face. Throughout the afternoon I pondered over ways and means to reach the great " outside," taking four trusted " stand-patters " into my confidence; they also wanted to go. For different reasons punishment of some kind awaited all of us, and as I was almost sure of a thrashing for fighting, I concluded that, if caught, I might as well make it do duty for trying to escape as well. All the boys calculated on such lines very nicely.

It was finally decided that the most practicable plan was to jump from the schoolroom window, when we were marching in line to the basement, to undress for the night. The distance to the ground was perhaps twenty feet, but during the afternoon we studied very carefully the probable spot we should land on, and all felt equal to the adventure. We should have to make the escape in bare feet, and without coats, but we decided that we didn't want the tell-tale jackets anyhow, and we thought we could smuggle our socks and caps into the schoolroom without detection.

That last evening in the schoolroom was a very nervous one, for four boys at least. From time to time, when the officer was not looking, we exchanged significant glances to make sure that there had been no defec-

tion in our ranks. Our caps and socks were hidden in our clothing. At last the whistle blew, books were put away, and the order to form line was given. My mind was firmly made up. Even if the other boys weakened I was going through the open window and on to the "outside." For some reason I felt as if success awaited me, and barring the drop from the window and a possible immediate capture, I feared very little. I was the first to take the drop. Suddenly I fell out of line, scrambled over the sill, and—dropped into the darkness. Whether the other three followed my example or not I do not know; probably not, because my disappearance made the officer reach threateningly for his revolver, as I was able to see while going over the sill. Once on the ground I waited for nobody, but went tearing over the lawn, barefooted and bareheaded, in the direction of the railroad track at the foot of the slope. There I concealed myself under a fence, and in a moment the great whistle told the surrounding country, with long blasts, that a "Ref" boy had escaped, while the flaring light lit up the lawn and assisted the officers in their search. Pretty soon I heard their voices and hurrying footsteps all about me, but they never came quite close enough to uncover my hiding place. I must have remained under the fence two good hours before I dared to proceed. This was about the conventional time given to a search, and I remained silent as the grave until all was quiet. Then, crawling rather than walking, I made my way to the railroad bridge, crossed it cat-like, and proceeded boldly toward the

wooded hills opposite the school—the hills that I had so often looked at longingly, and wondered whether I should ever be able to cross without being captured. The underbrush and fallen twigs and branches must have hurt my feet, but the scratches and bruises were hardly noticed in the excitement of getting away. And although the night had become fairly cool, and I had nothing but shirt and trousers to cover me, I was literally in a violent perspiration when I reached the top of the first hill, and looked back on the school and the flaming light.

"Good-bye, brush factory and strap," I murmured. "May we never meet again."

Early morning found me lying exhausted, with torn feet and hands, near a roadway leading, as I saw, to open fields where there were houses and barns. It seemed as if during the night I must have traveled easily twenty miles, but as a matter of fact I had covered but four. The sun was not yet up, and I lay quiet for some time, considering how the day would best be spent and nursing my sore feet. Gradually an unconquerable appetite and thirst came over me, which were accentuated by the smoke issuing from the farmhouse chimneys. This was a sure token that the breakfast fires had been started, and I recalled with relish the scant meal that the boys at the school would soon be eating. However, I was free! No guard was there to boss me about, and I could linger or proceed, as I wished. But that appetite! Finally, in desperation, I determined to risk my liberty and ask for something to eat at the

nearest farmhouse. It was impossible to proceed without food, and I very much needed a new outfit of clothing, both for safety and looks.

My reception at the farmhouse was puzzling at first. The good farmer and his wife gave me a bountiful meal, but the former looked at me suspiciously, and remarked that he had heard the school-whistle the night before. His good wife, however, was very compassionate and sympathetic. There was a grown-up son, who also seemed to be on my side. Would the mother and son win, I wondered. When the meal was over the farmer frankly told me that he knew from my clothes that I was a schoolboy, and that he did not believe at all the story I had given him by way of explanation. It was a case of run for dear life or ask for mercy. I determined to trust to my powers of persuasion, and for one solid hour I pleaded with that farmer not to take me back. He knew, and I knew, that he would receive fifteen dollars reward for my return, and as it was Sunday, and he was bound for church, the side trip to the school would take him very little out of his way.

"But it is against the law for me to help you to get away," the farmer contended. "I can be fined for doing it."

"Just give me some old clothes and shoes," I replied, "and no one will ever know that you saw me. Besides, I'll only go to the devil in that school. It did me no good."

The farmer seemed to waver, and I turned to the

son, asking him to intercede for me, telling him a little, very little, about myself. He smiled. "Pop ain't goin' to take you back, don't worry," he consoled me, and it seemed as if a great stone had been lifted off my back. Very few times in my life have I experienced the same peace and thankfulness that were mine after the son had spoken. Soon he brought me some old boots, a coat and a different cap, for which I gladly exchanged that of the school. When my pockets had been filled with sandwiches and doughnuts, and the farmer had at last finished cautioning me about being careful, I bade these good people good-bye. If they should ever see these lines, I want them once again to receive my heartfelt thanks for their hospitality, and to know that their kindness was not altogether misplaced.

All during that Sunday I remained hidden in some woods, resuming my journey toward the West Virginia state line at night. After five days' travel I crossed the imaginary boundary—it was a living thing to me—and was at last out of the jurisdiction of the superintendent and his officers. Then began that long eight months' tramp trip, during which I finally came to my senses and said *Adios* to *Die Ferne* forever—*Adios* in the sense that never again was she able to entangle me in a mesh of difficulties nor to entice me away from the task set before me. She thought many and many a time afterward, when the call of the Road was strong and tempting, that she again had me in her toils. But respectable vacation trips or *bona fide* investigations in the tramp world sufficed to satisfy my *Wanderlust.*

Without doubt these excursions and investigations were a compromise with the Road in a certain sense; the wanderer's temperament lingered with me for years. But *Die Ferne* was beaten for all time.

To the school life and the ensuing eight months' sojourn in Hoboland credit is also due for the disappearance of my pilfering inclination. When, how, why, or where it went, are questions I can answer but imperfectly to-day. It slipped out of my life as silently and secretly as it had squirmed into it, and all that I can definitely remember now in the shape of a " good-bye " to it, on my part, is a sudden awakening, one morning on the Road, and then and there resolving to leave other people's property alone. There was no long consideration of the matter, I merely quit on the spot; and when I knew that I had quit, that I was determined to live on what was mine or on nothing, the rest of the Road experience was a comparatively easy task.

I have said that I told the farmer who abetted me in my escape from the school, that I should only go to the devil if taken back to it. It is impossible to say now whether this would have happened or not. But it is unfair, as I think the matter over to-day, not to admit that, with all its failings and drawbacks, the school life helped to bring me to my senses. It set me to thinking, as never before, about the miserable cussedness of my ways, and it showed me in no unmistakable manner where *Die Ferne* would eventually lead me, unless I broke with her. The long, wearisome tramp trip that followed did what else was necessary to show me that

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kicking against the good, as I had been doing for so long, was unprofitable and unmanly.

At one time in my life I seriously contemplated taking an officer's position in a reform school, in the hope that I might be of use in that way. Politics—they are plastered over everything in our country, it seems—and doubts about my fitness for such work, eventually decided me against attempting it. But I desire to say here, that for young men interested in institutional work, and willing to make a number of sacrifices, I know of no better field for doing good than in a reform school. The more a candidate for such a position has studied, traveled and observed the *better*. In Germany there is a school or seminary where applicants for positions in corrective and, I think, penal institutions as well, go through a set course of training and study before they are accepted. Something similar, minus the rigid German notions of the infallibility of their " systems " and " cure-alls," might be tried to advantage in this country. The work to be done is deserving of the most sympathetic interest on the part of college and university trained men who feel drawn to such activities.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY TRAMPING EXPERIENCES

HOBOLAND—Gay-Cat Country—The Road—what memories these names bring to mind! Years ago they stood for more than they do now. There were not so many *bona fide* out-of-works or tramps as at present, and the terms described distinct territories and boundaries. Now, the hang-outs are overcrowded with wandering "stake men," and the real hobo, the "blowed-in-the-glass-stiff," more often than not has deserted the old haunts and built for himself new ones, hidden away in bushes or concealed in woods. I think, too, that the real article, as he existed in my day, is giving way, more and more, to the army of casual workers and itinerant day laborers. Whether he has "squared it" and lives respectably, or whether he has broken again into criminal ranks and is trying once more for the final grand "stake" that is to make him independent and comfortable, I cannot say. It is several years now since I have been on the real Road, in the United States, and I only infrequently look up old acquaintances in cities, where many of them are stationary the year round. The Road of twenty years ago, however, I learned to know during those eight

months of travel, as probably few boys of my years and bringing-up ever did know—or will know it. The word Road was used as a generic term for the railroads, turnpikes, lanes and trails which all wanderers, professional and semi-amateur, followed for purposes of travel, "graft" and general amusement. Hoboland was that part of the Road which the "blowed-in-the-glass-stiffs" were supposed to wander over—the highways and byways where the men who would not work and lived by begging alone were found. Gay-Cat Country, as undefined in the geographical sense as was Hoboland, for it stretched all over the United States, was the home and refuge of those tramps who *would* work on occasions—when winter came on, for instance, and box-cars grew too cold and cheerless. In spring, like the modern "stake" men, they gave up their jobs, and went merrily on their way again, the Road having become hospitable once more. Both Hoboland and Gay-Cat Country dovetailed into each other after a fashion—one "hang out," for example, often had to serve both sets of vagabonds—but the intersecting was almost entirely physical. The same railroads and highways were as open to the Gay-Cats, provided they were strong enough to assert their rights, as to the hoboes—the "hang-outs" also at times; but here the association stopped. The hobo considered himself, and really was, more of a person than the Gay-Cat, and he let the latter know it. Consequently, although both men in a year's time often covered pretty much the same territory, each one called this territory by a different name, and held himself pretty

well aloof from the other—the hobo, on account of pride and caste, the Gay-Cat because he knew that he was unwelcome in the "blowed-in-the-glass" circle. To-day, I make no doubt that the Road is tramped over by a hundred different species of vagrants, each having its own particular name, and, perhaps, even territory. The world has its shifts and changes among the outcast's as well as in the aristocrat's domain, and I hear now of strange clans of rovers that had not yet been organized when I began tramping. So it is with everything, and I should probably have difficulty now in finding the old sign posts and "hang-outs" that I once knew so well.

My first appearance on the Road proper, after so unceremoniously leaving brush factory and school-room, took place, one night, at some coke ovens near the State line toward which I was traveling. My boots had been exchanged for shoes, the old cap had given way to a better one, and the ragged coat had been patched. In this fashion I climbed to the top of the ovens and said "Hello!" to some men who were cooking their coffee in a tomato-can over one of the oven openings. I do not recall now whether they were Gay-Cats or hoboes, but they were at any rate very hospitable, which must be said of both classes of men when separated. Thrown together they are likely to be on their dignity—particularly the hoboes.

Coffee was given me, also bread and meat, and I was shown how to fix some planks across the edge of the oven for sleeping purposes. My inexperience became only too apparent when I told the men that I had "just

beat the Ref." The look they gave one another after this confession was a revelation to me at the time, and remains in my memory still as one of the earliest typical hobo traits I remarked. What it meant to me at the moment is not clear any longer; I probably simply made a note of it, and resolved to know more about it later on. Thinking it over, it seems to me that it epitomized in a glance all the secret clannishness and "ear-wigging" tendencies which the travelers of the Road possess in such large and abundant measure. The "ear-wigging" —listening—was plain to see when the men stopped talking themselves, and gave heed to me, practically a kid; the secrecy, when one of them kindly advised me not to spread the news of my escape too promiscuously; and the clannishness in giving a fellow roadster such practical counsel.

That night on the coke ovens was uneventful, except that all of us had to be careful not to roll off our perches into the hot fires beneath us, which fact calls to mind an experience I had later on in a railway sand-house in Ohio. The sand was just comfortably hot when I lay down to sleep, but I forgot that the fire might brighten up during the night, and I lay close to the stove. What was my dismay in the morning, on brushing off the sand, to find that the seat of my best trousers had been burned through over night. Fortunately I had two pair on, otherwise my predicament would have been no laughing matter.

Once over the State line, I made for Wheeling. There was no particular reason in heading for that

town, but in tramp life there is no special reason for going anywhere. Time and again I have started north or south with a well mapped out itinerary, and plans fixed and set. Along came some roadster with a more interesting route to follow, or what seemed to be such, and my route, or his, was discarded in a moment. Thus it ever was during the eight months; one day Chicago might be my objective, and I fancied that I knew exactly what was necessary to be done there. In a hundred miles, as likely as not, something far more important, as I thought, required my attention in New Orleans. *Die Ferne* has seldom had her wild calls more carefully listened to by me than they were at this time. There was no home that I dared go to, the world was literally my oyster, and all I had to do, or knew how to do, for the time being, was wander. Roadsters, who railroaded as persistently as I did, seldom stopping for more than a day or so, at the most a week end in any one place, are called victims of the "railroad fever."

In West Virginia I heard of a country district between the State line and Wheeling where it was easy to "feed," where, in fact, travelers on the highway, when meal-time came, were beckoned into the cabins by the mountaineers to have a bite. Such localities are called by tramps "fattenin'-up places." What with the nervousness, incident to the escape, and the following severe travels, I had become pretty thin and worn-out, and the country district in the hills took hold of my fancy. There is nothing of particular interest about the

locality or my stay there to call for especial comment here, except that the mountaineers were so friendly and hospitable that I was able to build up my strength very considerably for the struggle of existence in inhospitable places further on. It was also a capital hiding-place until the excitement over my departure from the school, if there had been any, should subside.

In my other writings I have told pretty minutely what I learned about tramp life during the eight months' trip as well as on later excursions. There is consequently not much left to tell on these lines except of a pretty personal nature and as it affects the general progress of this autobiography. I shall therefore have to skip hurriedly from district to district relating such incidents as illustrate my position and experience in Hoboland, and estimating what this strange country accomplished for me and with me.

During the first month of my wanderings I was bedless, and frequently roofless. Indeed, when I finally did rest or try to, in a bed, the experience was so strange that I slept very little. A box-car, a hay-stack, a railway tie drawn close to a fire—these were my principal lodging places during the entire eight months. It may have been a hard outing, but it toughened and inured me to unpleasantness which would certainly seem very undesirable now. In a way, they were undesirable then. I always laugh when a tramp tells me that he is happier in a box-car than in a bed. He merely fancies that he is, and I certainly should not like to risk offering him my bed in exchange for his box-car. Yet at the time

in question I was able to sleep uncommonly well in box-car or hay-stack, and except when traveling at night, eight hours' good rest constituted my regular portion. In general, I kept track of the names of the different States and large cities I visited, but, when asked to-day whether I have been in a certain town, I am often at a loss for an answer; I simply do not know whether I have been there or not. On the other hand, certain " stops " at comparatively insignificant places have clung in my memory when much larger places that I must have seen are dim and hazy. All told, I traveled in the great majority of the full-fledged States of that period, and visited many of the large cities.

At one of these minor " stops " in Michigan, I probably had a chance to experiment with that tantalizing dream of earlier years—the notion that to amount to anything I must go secretly to some place, work my way into a profession, and then on up the ladder until I should be able to return to my people, and say: " Well, with all my cussedness, I managed to get on."

The town had the conventional academy and other educational institutions which my dream had always included in the career I had in mind, and there was a hospitality about the people which promised all kinds of things. I got my dinner at the home of a well-to-do widow who very sensibly made me work for it, chopping wood, a task that I was careful to perform behind the house so that my companions, real hoboes, every one of them, should not see me breaking one of their cardinal rules. The work over, I was invited into the dining

room for my meal, during which the good hostess asked me rather minutely about my life. For some reason, I was in the "self-made man" mood at the time, and told the woman about my desire for an education, and later, a professional career. She came over to my seat, examined my cranium, and then, turning to her daughter—a sightly miss—said: "The head is not at all badly shaped. He *may* be bright."

"Let us hope so, for his sake anyhow," was the daughter's rather doubtful comment. Before leaving, the mother was rather insistent on my calling at the office of a local lawyer who was reported to be "much interested in young men, and their welfare." I promised to look him up, but somehow his time and mine did not agree—he was not at his office—and perhaps I lost another chance to be a legal light. As the weeks and months went by, the dream of "self-madeness," as I once heard a tramp describe it, became less and less oppressive; at any rate, I noticed that merely because a town or village harbored an academy and college, and possibly a philanthropic lawyer, did not suffice to tempt me out of the box-car rolling through the locality. Nothing else in particular had come to take its place, that I recall. But certain it is that the box-car, on a bright, sunny day, rolling along, clinkety-clink, chunkety-chunk, possessed temporary attractions which dreamy self-madeness could not offer. This particular time in my wanderings probably saw the height of the railroad fever in me. It burned and sizzled it almost seemed on occasions, and the distant whistle of a "freight"

going my way, or any way, for that matter, became as sweet a sound as was ever the dinner call or the recess bell. To-day I can laugh at all this, but it was a very serious matter in those days; unless I covered a certain number of miles each day or week, and saw so many different States, cities, rivers and kinds of people, I was disappointed—Hoboland was not giving me my share of her bounteous supply of fun and change. Of course, I was called "railroad crazy" by the quieter roadsters in whom the fever, as such, had long since subsided, but I did not mind. Farther, farther, *farther!* This was what I insisted on and got. In the end I had seen a great deal, of course, but altogether too much of it only superficially. Later tramp trips, undertaken with a serious purpose and confined to narrower limits, have netted me much more lasting information and amusement.

Of accidents during my whirl-wind travels I am thankful to say that there is very little to report. While other men and boys were breaking legs, getting crushed under wheels and falling between cars, I went serenely on my way unharmed. There is a world of significance to me now in the words: "Unknown man among the dead," printed so often in connection with freight-train wrecks. They usually mean that one more hobo or Gay-Cat has "cashed in" and is "bound out." Perhaps I came as near to a serious mishap in western Pennsylvania as anywhere else. I was traveling with a tall, lanky roadster, called Slim, on the "Lake Shore" Railroad. We had been on the train the greater part of the night in the hopes of reaching Erie before daylight. The

" freight," however, had met with a number of delays, and dawn found us still twelve miles out of Erie. We were riding " outside," on the bumpers, and on the tops of the cars. When the train stopped to take water we cautiously hid in the long grass near the track, so that the trainmen would not discover us. Pretty soon the whistle blew and the train moved on again. " Slim," my companion, was the first to climb up the ladder, and I soon followed him. By this time the car we were on had reached the watering-plug, where the fireman had carelessly left the swing arm pointing toward the train. There was plenty of room for the train to pass without touching it, but while climbing the ladder I let my body swing backward some distance to see whether the crew in the caboose were watching us. " Slim " was already on top. Suddenly the arm of the watering apparatus caught me on the hip, and I was swung completely over it, falling luckily on my back, hands and feet on the ground below, but with my left hand within about three inches of the rail and wheels. I was so frightened that at least two cars went by me before I ventured to move. Then I slunk over to the grass to see how badly I had been hurt. There was not a bruise or a scratch on me. In a moment I was back on the train again, looking for " Slim."

" You're a nice fellow! " I said to him in no uncertain tones of disgust. " Couldn't even look back to see where I'd fallen, huh? "

" I did look back," he returned in an aggrieved manner. " I saw the whole business. What was the use o'

gettin' off when I saw 't you was all to the good? Besides, I want to make Erie for breakfast."

Such are the "blowed-in-the-glass-stiffs." When in a hurry and a meal is in sight, even nations can clash and fall without influencing a hobo's itinerary one iota. Even had my hand been crushed under the wheels, it is doubtful whether "Slim" would have gotten off the train. Erie once reached, and a good breakfast added to his assets, he would doubtless have bestirred himself in my behalf. One learns not to complain in Hoboland about such trifles. I have also been guilty of seeing companions in danger, with a calm eye and a steady lip.

My first "baptism of fire," when the "Song of The Bullet" was heard in all its completeness, took place in Iowa, or western Illinois, I forget which, this forgetfulness being another testimony to the cold-blooded indifference of the Road and its travelers as to time, place and weather. Five of us were very anxious to "make" Chicago ("Chi") by early morning of the next day. Ordinarily, we had plenty of time, but we failed to consider the railroad we were on—the C. B. and Q., or the "Q," as it is more familiarly known. Some years previous the great "Q" strike had taken place, affording so-called "scabs" from the East, who were very liberally introduced into the "Q's" territory, an opportunity to manage things for a time. Their lot was not an easy one, and to be called "scabs" incensed them not a little.

We determined to ride on an afternoon "freight" at least far enough to land somewhere nicely about time

for supper. I certainly remember catching the train in Iowa, but whether the " Song of the Bullet " was sung there or on the Illinois side of the Mississippi, I am at a loss to say. On one side or the other the crew discovered us, and insisted on our " hitting the gravel," getting off the train. We demurred.

" Get off, you dirty tramps," the conductor ordered.

We were not particularly dirty, and although we might be called tramps and live up to the " calling," we believed that even as such, we were higher in the social scale than were " scabs." The crew numbered four. As I have said, we were five strong. Finally, losing our tempers and judgment, we told the conductor that we would not only ride in his train, but his caboose as well, and we scrambled for places on the platform. He tried to kick at us first, but fright at our numbers soon overcame him, and, with an oath, he ran into the caboose, shouting back, " I'll soon see who is running this train." We knew only too well what his actions meant, and dropped off. In a minute he appeared on the back platform with a revolver and opened up on us. Fortunately, his train was moving ahead at a fair pace and he was a poor shot. As I recall the incident none of us was particularly frightened, and there was no such " Pingh-h " in the " Song of the Bullet " as I have so often heard described. The " Pingh-h " indeed I have never heard anywhere. The bullets that the conductor sent our way went over our heads and around us, with a whizzing whine. As Bret Harte suggests in his bullet verses, it was as if the disappoint-

ment at not reaching us was overwhelmingly acute. Since that experience other bullets have whizzed and whined about me—not many, thanks!—and it seemed to me sometimes that they went purring on their flight, and then again whining. Perhaps the purring bullets found soft lodgment after passing me, but I hope not if the mark was a human being.

An experience that I had in a railroad sand-house in Wisconsin illustrates the definiteness with which the hobo must frequently assert his rights. A man, called "Scotchy" by some, "Rhuderick" by others, was my companion at the time. We were the first-comers at the sand-house, and wholly ignorant of a Wisconsin collection of rovers, nick-named "The Kickers." These Kickers, it appears, had been in the habit of running all available tramp "stops" (sleeping places) to suit their own nonsense, and if their so-called "spots" at any "stop" were found appropriated by others on their arrival, no matter how late, they proceeded to drive the alleged interlopers out, if they felt strong enough. They were hoboes of a kind, but they were careful to travel *incognito* when alone. "Scotchy" and I quite unwittingly took three of the Kickers' places in the sand-house in question, and were comfortably asleep when the Kickers appeared.

"You got yer nerve on," said one of the burly brutes to "Scotchy," tickling him none too gently in the ribs with his toe-tip. "Get out o' there, an' give yer betters their rights." The rasping voice and the striking of matches wakened me also. Somehow, it

may have been tramp instinct, for certainly the Road develops such things, I felt impelled on the instant to grab and capture the poker, and "Scotchy" secured the sand-bucket.

"Me betters, huh?" cried "Scotchy," ominously swinging his bucket. "This for you," and he brought the bucket perilously near one of the Kickers' heads. Matches were being struck on all sides, and it was not difficult to see. The Kickers framed closely together for their attack. They forgot, or did not know, about my poker. Pretty soon another match was struck. The Kickers had coupling pins, and looked formidable. I was in a shadow. They consolidated their forces against "Scotchy." His bucket, however, stretched one Kicker flat before he had time to defend himself. Total darkness and silence followed. Then a Kicker ventured another match. This was my chance. The long poker shot out, and the point must have hit hard in the temple; at any rate, the wounded Kicker sat down. The remaining Kicker risked still one more light, but on seeing his disabled pals, he made for the door. Too late! Other hoboes, not Kickers, had arrived, "dope" lights were secured, and the story was told. The poor Kickers were "kicked" out of that sand-house as never before or since, I am sure.

Such aggregations of tramps are met with throughout Hoboland, and there are constant clashes between them and itinerant roadsters traversing the gangs' districts. The only thing to do is to fight shy of them when alone, and if in force, to fight them; otherwise they become so

arrogant and despotic that no one, not even the mere short distance trespasser, is left unmolested.

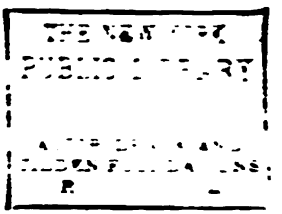
In spite of all the chances to get hurt, in feelings as well as physically, that Hoboland offers to all comers, I must repeat that I was able to explore its highways and byways with very few scratches to my credit or discredit. A small scar or two and some tatoo figures constitute all the bodily marks of the experience that I carry to-day. There were opportunities without number for fisticuffs, but, as I have declared, I had long since joined the peace movement, and regularly fought shy of them.

A thirty days' sentence to jail, toward the close of the eight months' trip, hurt and tantalized me more than any of the wrecks on railroads or disputes with bullies. It came unfortunately, in June, the hoboes' favorite month. Sleeping in a box-car at night was my crime. I have described the arrest and general experience in one of my tramp books, but I cannot forbear saying a few words about the judge who sentenced me. At the time, 1889 I think was the year, he was police judge in Utica, N. Y., where in company with a friend, I was caught. The night's batch of prisoners were brought before him at one and the same time—drunks, thieves, runaway boys, train-jumpers, *bona fide* hoboes and Gay-Cats. The court-room was a dingy little place with benches for the prisoners and officers, and a raised platform with a desk for the judge. I shall never forget how the latter looked—" spick and span " to the last degree in outward appearance, but there was an over-night look

in his face that boded us ill, I feared. "Just ez if he'd come out of a Turkish bath," whispered an unfortunate who had been found asleep in the streets. The judge certainly paid little enough attention to our cases to have come from anywhere, but a Turkish bath ought to have left him more merciful. We were all punished according to the *judge's* whims and the law's limitations, the over-night look on the face of our persecutor, as we considered him, deepening, it seemed, with each sentence. My "thirty-day" fate rolled as easily from his lips as did the five and ten-day pronouncements for the "alcoholics"; he did not seem to know any difference between them. Perhaps, in the years that have intervened, he has been enlightened on this point. I hope so for his sake, at least.

The sentencing over, we prisoners were taken to our different destinations, mine being the jail at Rome, the Utica prison being crowded. There is little to add here to what I have long since told in print about my stay there; but perhaps I have never emphasized sufficiently the tramp's disgust at having "to do time" in June. From May till November is his natural roving time, his box-car vacation; in winter, jail, even the workhouse is often more of a boon than otherwise. The Rome jail consequently harbored very unwilling guests in the persons of the few tramps lodged there. However, even thirty summer days, precious as they are on the "outside," pass away sooner than one at first expects them to, and then comes that glorious moment—thunder, lightning, not even a pouring rain can mar it—when the freed

Oliver Atherton Willard. Josiah Flynt's Father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one is his own master again. There may be other experiences in life more ecstatic than this one, but I would willingly trade them all temporarily for that first gasp in the open air, and that unfettered tread on the ground, which the discharged prisoner enjoys.

Of my status as a tramp in the general social fabric in Hoboland, perhaps enough is said when I report that before quitting the Road, I could have at any time claimed and secured the respect due to the "blowed-in-the-glass" wanderer. Yet I could make myself quite as much at home at a "hang-out" of the Gay-Cats as among the hoboes. Begging for money was something that I indulged in as little as possible; at the start, it was impossible for me to ask for "coin." My meals, however, lodging and clothes were found by me in the same abundance as the old-timer's. I had to have such things, and as asking for them was the conventional way of getting them, I asked persistently, regularly and fairly successfully.

There is nothing to be said in defense of this practice. It is just as much a "graft" as stealing is; indeed, stealing is looked upon in the Under World as by all odds the more aristocratic undertaking. But stealing in Hoboland is not a favorite business or pastime. Hoboland is the home of the discouraged criminal who has no other refuge. His criminal wit, if he had any, has not panned out well, and he resorts to beggary and clandestine railroading as the next best time-killer. Punishment has tired him out, frightened him, and the Road looms up before him spacious and friendly.

I have often been asked seriously, whether the Road can be looked upon as a necessary school of discipline for certain natures; whether, for instance, as an anxious mother of a wayward boy, once put the query to me, " is there enough that is worth while in it, if looked for, to overbalance that which is not worth while? " It depends both on the boy and the treatment he gives to and gets from his pals. In general, the Road is not to be recommended—not for morals, comfort, cleanliness, or " respectability." It is a backwater section of our civilization; it is full of malaria and other swampy things. Yet, with all its miasma, this backwater district has sent many a good man back to the main Road, which we all try to travel. In my own case, I can certainly say that many desirable truths were revealed to me while in Hoboland which it seemed impossible for me to grasp until having had the Hoboland experience.

But to speak seriously of the Road as a recuperating place for deteriorated morals, or as an invigorator for weak natures, I can only say—in general, don't try it. There are too many " building-up " farms and " nerve strengthening " sanatoriums to make it necessary to-day for any one to have to resort to Hoboland to be put right again. Yet the Road will probably be with us, for better or for worse, after the soothing farms and disciplinary sanatoriums have dwindled away; I mean such as may be patronized, say, in the next thousand years or so. There were tramps thousands of years ago, and I fear that they will be on the earth, if there be an earth then, thousands of years hence. They change

a little in dress, customs and diet as the years roll by, just as other people change. But, for all practical purposes, I should expect to find the ancient Egyptian hobo, for instance, if he could come to life and would be natural, pretty much the same kind of roadster that we know in our present American type. Laziness, loafing, *Wanderlust* and begging are to-day what they ever have been—qualities and habits that are passed on from generation to generation, practically intact.

My longest *Wanderlust* trip came to an end in the much maligned city of Hoboken, N. J. Some work done for a farmer, near Castleton on the Hudson River netted me a few dollars, and, one night in September, in company of an aged Irishman, I drifted down the river to the great city on a canal boat. The Irishman got separated from me in the crowded thoroughfares in New York, and I drifted alone over to Hoboken, bent on an important errand, but doubtful about its outcome. Little did I realize then what a hard task there was ahead of me, and how great the change in my life was to be, the task once finished.

CHAPTER VIII

MY VOYAGE TO EUROPE

TWENTY years ago, and probably at an earlier date still, the traveler bound for Europe on any of the ships, sailing from Hoboken, might have seen, had he been curious enough to look about him, a strange collection of men of all ages, sizes and make-ups, huddled together nights in a musty cellar only a few steps from the North German Lloyd's docks. And, had he talked with this uncouth company, he would have learned much about the ways and means necessary to make big ships go and come on their ocean voyages.

Somewhat less than twenty years ago, say eighteen, a greasy paper sign was tacked to the door of the cellar for the benefit of those who might be looking for the dingy hole. It read: " Internashnul Bankrupp Klubb—Wellcome! " The words and lettering were the work of an Italian lad, who had a faculty for seeing the humor in things which made others cry and sigh. In years that have passed the sign has been blown away, and a barber to-day holds forth where the " Bankrupps " formerly lodged. The store above, a general furnishing establishment for emigrants and immigrants, has also given way to a saloon, I think, and the outfitting

business of former days has developed, in the hands of the old proprietor's sons, into a general banking and exchange affair near-by around the corner. The old proprietor has long since been gathered unto his fathers, I have been told; but the boys possess much of his business acumen and money-getting propensities and are doing well, preferring, however, to handle the currencies of the various nations to selling tin pots, pans, mattresses and shoddy clothing, as did the old man.

Their father was a Hebrew, who may or may not have had a very interesting history before I met him, but at the time of our acquaintance he looked so fat and comfortable and money was so plainly his friend and benefactor that he was a pretty prosaic representative of his race. I had heard about him in New York, after making unsuccessful attempts there and in Brooklyn to secure a berth as caretaker on a Europe-bound cattle-ship.

Eight months of roughing it on the Road had worked many changes in my temperament, ways of calculating, and general appearance. I was no longer the youth who had jumped out of that second-story window and made for parts unknown. Had it been necessary, so tough and hardened had my physique become, that on arriving in Hoboken, I could have done myself credit, I think, in getting out of a third-story window. I was thin and scrawny, to be sure, but such characteristics are most deceiving to the observer unacquainted with tramp life. They may mean disease, of course, but more frequently good health, and in my case it was

decidedly the latter. Whatever else hoboing had done or failed to do for me, it had steeled my muscles, tightened up my nerve, and jostled my self-reliance into a thoroughly working condition. Many a vacation in recent years, so far as mere health is concerned, might have been spent with profit on the Road. But eighteen years ago it was a different matter. *Die Ferne* as such was at least temporarily under control; I had become tired of simply drifting, and whether I should find a home abroad or not, the outlook could hardly be much darker over seas than in my own country. I had some knowledge of foreign languages, and knew that, at a pinch, I could retreat to England, or to one of her colonies, if Germany should prove inhospitable. How to get across was the main problem. The cattle-ships were over-manned, it seemed, and the prospects of succeeding as a stowaway were pronounced bad.

I finally heard of the corpulent Hebrew and the "Bankrupps" Club in Hoboken. A German sailor told me about the place, describing the cellar as a refuge for "gebusted" Europeans, who were prepared to work their way back to their old country homes as coal-passers. The sailor said that any one, European or not, was welcome at the club, provided he looked able to stand the trip. The Hebrew received two dollars from the steamship companies for every man he succeeded in shipping.

My first interview with this man, how he lorded it over me and how I answered him back—these things are as vivid to me to-day as they were years ago. "Du

bist zu schwach" (you are too weak), he told me on hearing of my desire for a coal trimmer's berth. "Pig mens are necessary for dat vork," and his large Oriental eyes ran disdainfully over my shabby appearance.

"Never you mind how *schwach* I am," I assured him; "that's my look-out. See here! I'll give you two dollars besides what the company gives you, if you'll get me a berth."

Again the Oriental's eyes rolled, and closed. "Vell," the man returned at last, "you can sleep downstairs, but I t'ink you are *zu schwach.*"

The week spent "downstairs" is perhaps as memorable a week as any in my existence. Day after day went by, "Pig mens" by the dozen left the cellar to take their positions, great ships whistled and drew out into the mighty stream outward bound, my little store of dimes and nickels grew smaller and smaller—and I was still "downstairs," awaiting my chance (a hopeless one it seemed) with the other incapables that the ships' doctors had refused to pass. The Italian lad, with his sweet tenor voice and sunny temperament, helped to brighten the life in the daytime and early evening, but the dark hours of the night, full of the groans and sighs of the old men, trying for berths, were dismal enough. Nearly every nationality was represented in the cellar during the week I spent there, but Germans predominated. What tales of woe and distress these men had to tell! They were all "gebusted," every one of them. A pawnbroker would probably not have given five dollars for the possessions of the entire crew.

"Amerika" was the delinquent in each reported case of failure—the men themselves were cock-sure that they were in no particular to blame for their defeat and bankruptcy. "I should never have come to this accursed land," was the claim of practically all of the inmates of the cellar, except the little Italian. He liked *Neuvo Yorko, malto una citt bellissima*—but he wanted to see his mother and *Itallia* once more. Then he was coming back to *Neuvo Yorko* to be mayor, perhaps, some day. The hope that is in Americans was also in him. He believed in it, in himself and in his mother; why should he not become a good American? Why not, indeed?

But those poor old men from Norway! Theirs was the saddest plight. "The boogs" (bugs), one said to me, an ancient creature with sunken eyes and temples, "they eat down all my farm—all. They come in a day. My mortgage money due. They take my crops—all I had. No! America no good for me. I go back see my daughter. Norway better." I wonder where the poor old soul is, if he be still on earth. Ship after ship went out, but there was no berth for his withered up body, and after each defeat, he fell back, sighing, in his corner of the cellar, a picture of disappointment and chagrin such as I never have seen elsewhere, nor care to gaze upon again.

Our beds were nothing but newspapers, some yellow, some half so, and others sedate enough, I make no doubt. We slept, however, quite oblivious of newspaper policies and editorials. Looking for our meals and wondering when our berths on the steamers would be

ready constituted our day's work, and left us at night, too tired out to know or care much whether we were lying on feathers or iron. I have since had many a restful night in Hoboken, and to induce sleep, even with mosquitoes as bed-fellows, nothing more has been necessary than to recall those newspaper nights in the Hebrew's underground refuge. I trust that he is resting well somewhere.

"Get up, *presto!* We're all going, *presto!*" It was five o'clock on a cool October morning, and my friend, the little Italian, was tugging away at my jacket. "Get up, *fratello,*" he persisted. "Mucha good news." The light was struggling in through the cobwebbed windows and doorway, and the Norwegian was wakefully sighing again. I sat up, rubbed my eyes, and stared wonderingly at the Italian.

"Where's your good news?" I yawned, and pulled on my jacket.

"Mucha—mucha," he went on. "Policeman, he dead. Eighteen firemen and passers put hatchet in his head right front here. Blood on the sidewalk. Firemen and passers are pinched. Ship—she call the *Elbe* —she sail nine o'clock. The old Jew, he got to ship us. No time to look 'roun'. Mucha good news, what?"

I was the first to tell the Hebrew of what had happened over night, emphasizing the necessity of finding coal-passers immediately and the fact that we were the handiest materials. What a change came over the man's face! Sleepy wrinkles, indolent eyes, jeweled

hands, projecting paunch were started into wondrous animation.

"You sure?" he asked eagerly.

"Absolutely. The men are all arrested."

"Ah, ha!" and the jeweled hands rubbed each other appreciatively. "Very goot! Now comes your *Gelegenhei*—that is goot. I see about things quick," and he waddled over to the North German Lloyd docks to assure himself that the news was correct—that the Italian had not made a mistake on account of using some dime novels for a pillow the night before. Thirty-six dollars were his if he could find the requisite number of men—a good wage for his time and labor.

"Ya, ya," he chuckled, a half-hour later, when I saw him again. "This time you go, *ganz sicher*. You a very lucky boy. Tell the others to stick in the cellar; I must not lose them."

At eight o'clock he appeared among us to select the most serviceable looking men. Again the poor old Norwegian was counted out—"*zu schwach*," the Hebrew thundered in reply to the man's entreaties to be taken, and once more he slunk away to his corner, weeping. There were still others who failed to come up to the Hebrew's standard of fitness, but no case was so pitiful as that of the Norwegian.

Eighteen men, some expert firemen found elsewhere, and the rest green coal-passers like myself, were finally chosen, lined up in the street, counted for the twentieth time, it seemed, by the Hebrew's mathematical sons, and then marched in single file across the street and down

the dock to the *Elbe's* gang-plank, where the ship's doctor awaited us. The stokeroom was so short-handed that the man was forced to accept all of us, something that he certainly would not have done had there been a larger collection of men to choose from. He smiled significantly when he let me pass, and I was reminded of what a saloon-keeper had said to me earlier in the morning. I had gone to his place for breakfast, and he asked me whether I was looking for a job. I said that I was, explaining how long we all had waited for opportunities to ship.

"You goin' as a passer?" he exclaimed. "Why, boy, they'll bury you at sea, sure. You can't stand the work. Just wait and see," he warned, as if waiting, seeing and sea-burial were necessary to substantiate his words.

"Stay here with me," he went on, "and I'll give you a job."

"Doing what?"

"Oh, cleaning up and learning the business."

I thanked him for his kindness, but insisted that I was going to ship.

"Well, when they're tossing you overboard, don't blame me," he requested, replenishing my soup-plate as if it were the last "filler-in" I should ever have on land. When we were all in line, and marching to the ship, he waved me an *adios* with a beer towel from his doorway, and reminded me not to forget what he had said.

As in earlier days, when attending college and living

in the lawyer's home, a lawyer's career had been ruthlessly thrown aside, I was now perhaps throwing away a wonderful chance to become a saloonkeeper—a great fat brewer, even, who could tell? Thus it is that opportunities come and go. I might now be living in ease and luxury in a mosquitoless palace on the Hoboken Heights. As it is, I am a poor struggler still—but for the time being unmolested by mosquitoes, thank heaven. Many and many times after our good ship had put to sea, and we had all been initiated in our work, I remembered my friend, the saloonkeeper, and temporarily regretted that I had not thrown my lot with his concern. Now, I know that it was all for the best that the coal-passer's job was preferred. Only the other day I learned with regret that the saloonkeeper became insane not so very long after I had known him, his monomania being sidewalks. They say he got so bad that he thought the ceiling of his saloon was a sidewalk, and it was when he tried to use the ceiling as a sidewalk for his empty beer kegs that he was pronounced incurably out of order.

Once assigned to our different bunks on the *Elbe,* one of the head firemen told us off to our different watches. An officer, passing at this time, remarked that the head fireman had " a rum lot " of trimmers to handle.

" Ach Gott! " the latter returned jovially. " The heat will sweat 'em into shape. I know the kind."

No doubt he did, but I recall some men, nevertheless, that the heat failed to sweat into shape, or into anything else worth while. They were born laggards and sneaks,

throwing all the work they could shirk on others who were honestly trying to do their best. It is trite enough to say that such human beings are found everywhere, but they certainly ought to be barred from the fire-room of an ocean liner.

My "watches," four hours long, began at eight in the morning and at four in the afternoon; the rest of the time was my own, excepting when it was my turn to carry water and help clean up the mess-room.

The first descent into the fire-room is unforgetable. Although hell as a domicile had long since been given up by me as a mere theological contrivance, useful to keep people guessing, but otherwise an imposition on a sane person's intelligence and not worth considering in the general scheme of things, going down that series of ladders into the bowels of the old *Elbe,* the heat seemingly jumping ten degrees a ladder, gave my cocksure disposal of hell a severe jolt. I thought of General Sherman's oft-quoted remark about war, and wondered whether he had ever tested his faith in the same by later investigations in a liner's stoke-room. Indeed, I thought of everything, it seemed, that spelled hellish things.

At last the final ladder was reached, and we were at the bottom—the bottom of everything was the thought in more minds than one that afternoon. The head fireman of our watch immediately called my attention to a poker, easily an inch and a half thick and twenty to thirty feet long. "Yours!" he screamed. "Yours!" and he threw open one of the ash doors of a furnace

pantomiming what I was to do with the poker. I dove for it madly, just barely raised it from the floor, and got it started into the ashes—and then dropped none too neatly on top of it. "Hurry up, you sow-pig," the fireman yelled, and I struggled again with the terrible poker, finally managing to rake out the ashes. Then came "ash heave," the *Elbe* having the old bucket system for the job. Great metal pails were let down to us from above through a ventilator. The pails filled, they were hauled up again, dumped and then sent down for another filling. On one occasion a pail broke loose from the chain, and came crashing down the ventilator under which I was having an airing. For some reason I did not hear the pail, and the fireman had barely time to shove me out of danger when the bucket fell to the floor with a sickening thud. If we had ever met —but what's the use of "if-ing" any more than "perhaps-ing"? It was simply a clear case of deferred "cashing-in."

The ashes out and up, we trimmers were divided into shovelers and carriers. Sometimes I was a carrier and had to haul baskets of coal to the firemen—"trimming" the coal consists, so far as I ever found out, in merely dumping the basketfuls conveniently for the firemen; and sometimes I was a shoveler, my duties then consisting of filling the baskets for the passers. Every bit of it, passing and shoveling, was honest, hard work. Shirking was severely reprimanded, but, as I have said, there were a few who did just as little as they could, although they were far better fitted for the work than I was,

for instance. Once our "boss" decided that I was moving too slowly. He found me struggling with a full basket, in the alleyway between the hot boilers. "Further with the coals," he cried; "further!" accompanying the command with what he termed a "swat" on my head with his sweat-rag. I was tired out, mentally and physically, my head was dizzy, and my legs wobbled. For one very short second, after the fireman had hit me, I came very near losing control of myself, and doing something very reckless. That sweat-rag "swat" had aroused whatever was left in me of manhood, honor and pride, and I looked the fireman in the eye with murder in my own. He turned, and I was just about to reach for a large piece of coal and let him have it, when such vestiges of common-sense as were left to me asserted themselves; and I remembered what treatment was accorded mutinous acts on the high seas. Without doubt I should have been put in irons, and further trouble might have awaited me in Germany. I dropped the piece of coal and proceeded on my way, a coward, it seemed, and I felt like one. But it was better for the time being to put up with such feelings, galling though they were, than to be shut up and thrown into irons. I must blame my tramp life, if blame be necessary in the premises, for having often pocketed my pride on more or less similar occasions, when an overwhelming defeat stared me in the face had I taken the offensive.

About the middle of each watch "refreshments" were served in the shape of gin. A huge bottle, some-

times a pail, was passed around, and each man, fireman as well as trimmer, was expected to take his full share. During the short respite there was the faintest possible semblance of joviality among the men. Scrappy conversations were heard, and occasionally a laugh—a hoarse, vulgar, coal-dust laugh might be distinguished from the general noise. Our watch was composed of as rough a set of men as I have ever worked with. Every move they made was accompanied with a curse, and the firemen, stripped to the waist and the perspiration running off them, looked like horrible demons, at times, when they tended their fires. Yet when the "watch" was over with and the men had cleaned up, many of them showed gentler traits of character which redeemed much of their roughness when below.

The call to go up the ladders was the sweetest sound I heard throughout the trip. First, the men to relieve us would come clattering down, and soon after we were free to go back to daylight and fresh aïr again. There was generally a shout of gladness on such occasions, the firemen being quite as happy as the inexperienced trimmers. My little Italian friend used to sing "Santa Lucia" on nearly every climb bathwards and bunkwards. A wash-down awaited all of us at the top, and soon after a sumptuous meal, in quantity and wholesomeness certainly as good as anything given the saloon passengers. The head fireman insisted on our eating all that we could. He wanted able-bodied, well-nourished trimmers on his staff, and I, at least, often had to eat more than I wanted, or really needed.

One day I decided to try to escape a watch. The night before I had hardly slept at all, my eyes were painfully sore from cinders getting into them, and I was generally pretty well used up. Other men had been relieved of duty at different times, and it seemed to me that my turn was due. I went to the doctor.

"Well?" he said in English. I dwelt mainly on my sore eyes, telling him how the heat inflamed them.

"Let me see them," and he threw back the lids in turn, washing out each eye as if it had been a marble-top table.

"How about them now?" he questioned, after throwing away the blackened cloth. It would have paid to tell him that they were better if only to keep him from going at them again.

"Oh, but my lame back!" I replied, glad to shift the doctor's attention in that direction. The worst he could do to my back was to put a plaster on it, I reasoned, and this would almost certainly relieve me of one watch at least.

"Don't stoop so much," was all he would recommend. "What else?"

"Well, Doctor," I pursued, "I'm sick, sick all over. I need at least one watch to rest up in."

The good man became facetious.

"Why, we're all sick," he laughed. "The captain, the first officer, the cook, and what not. We're terribly short-handed. If you don't keep your watches the ship simply won't go, and heaven knows when we'll see Bremerhaven."

I smiled a very sickly smile, and retired. If the old *Elbe* was so hard up for propulsion power that my weak services were unequivocally necessary, then of course I must do my utmost to save the lives, perhaps, of the precious freight in the cabins—but, oh! how I wished that I had remained in Hoboken and become a saloonkeeper, anything in fact but a coal-passer.

The first glimpse we had of land may have been a lovelier sight to some of the cabin passengers than it was to us trimmers, but it hardly seems possible. My companions told me that the rocks and cliffs, barely visible, on our left, were England, the home of my ancestors, but this fact did not interest me one-half so much as the far more important fact that they represented *terra firma.* I wanted to put my feet on land again, even in Turkey if necessary. Coal-passing, bunker life, hot fires, and clanging ash buckets had cured me for the time being at least of all sea-going propensities in a professional capacity. A flattering offer to command a great liner would hardly have tempted me just then. Indeed, tramp life, with all its drawbacks, seemed a summer pastime compared with bunker life.

The twelfth day out, I think it was, we "made" Bremerhaven, where the good ship was to have a rest, and the men who had shipped in Hoboken were to be paid off. The long voyage was over, I had finished my last "watch" below, and was free to mingle with the steerage passengers on deck and view the new country I had traveled so far to see. My clothes were the same

that I had gone on board with in Hoboken—a fairly respectable outfit then, but now sadly in need of cleaning and repair. My face and hands were dark and grimy, although they had been given numberless washings; it was simply impossible to get all of the coal dust out of them. Indeed, it was days before my hands looked normal again.

The head fireman saw me on the deck, and came up to me. His whole manner had changed. His duty was over, the great ship was in the harbor, and he could afford to unbend a little.

"Not dressed yet to go ashore?" he said in a friendly manner, his eyes running hurriedly over my clothes. "We'll dock soon, and you want to be ready."

"These are all the shore clothes or any other kind that I've got," I replied, and for aught I could see just then they were all that I was going to have for some time to come.

"I'm too big, or you could have some of mine," the fireman assured me, the obvious sincerity of his offer making me quite forget the "swat" he had given me in the fire-room. We shook hands, congratulated each other on having done his part to help bring the ship into port, and then separated, five minutes and a kindly manner on the part of the fireman having been quite sufficient to scatter forever, I trust, all the murderous thoughts of revenge I had been a week and more storing up against him. Such has been the fate of nearly all of my revengeful intentions in life. Either they have consumed themselves with their own intense warmth, or a

few words of reconciliation have cooled them down until they have become flabby and useless.

It was a very different line of coal-passers that marched from the *Elbe* to the *Seemann's Amt* in Bremerhaven to be paid off, from the one that had formed in front of the Hebrew's store in Hoboken. Our hard and miserable task was behind us, money was "in sight," and the majority of the men were at home again. We received seventeen marks and fifty pfennigs apiece for the trip, four dollars and a fraction in American currency. We bade one another good-by over some *krugs* of beer, and singly and in groups went our different ways. I waved a final *adios* to the *Elbe,* and joined two firemen, who spoke English and had offered to see me off for Berlin, my next destination.

I learned in their company something that life in sailor's quarters and homes later on has confirmed in every particular—*i.e.,* seafaring men, when bidding one another good-by after a voyage together, should each take absolutely different directions on separating, eschewing all group gatherings and "one last drink" sociability. But one might as well preach theosophy to baboons, as to try to teach this doctrine to men who "go down to the sea in ships." Indeed, it is a thankless job to attempt to teach the latter anything until they have squandered a part of their money, only too frequently all of it, on a drunk. It was thus in Bremerhaven in my day, and I make no doubt that it is the same to-day wherever there are ports and paid-off seafaring men—in Calcutta, Singapore, 'Frisco, New York, or

where you will. And why not? Is the coal-passer's life to be spent entirely in the bunkers? What is more natural than that when ashore he should try to forget some of the hard knocks, sweat and dust in the stoke-room, in a carousal in the open? What, indeed, has all the turmoil below been suffered for if not to allow such indulgence on land? The moralist, the economist, the Sabbatarian doubtless have their individual answers to these queries. All I know about the questions and my relation to them at the time of leaving the *Elbe* in Bremerhaven is that, my ticket for Berlin secured and two spare marks slyly hidden away in case of an emergency, prudence, temperance and economy were utterly disregarded. I sang, laughed and feasted with my friends to the limit of my financial and physical capacity, and I cannot recall having enjoyed a more righteous "good" time on a dollar and a half in all my life. So, hard though the voyage had been, I blessed the *Elbe* for the pleasure she had guided me to. Poor old ship! I was in Rome when she went down in the North Sea. I was reading the "bulletins" in front of the English book-store in the Piazza di Spagne. Suddenly my eyes spied the dispatch about the *Elbe*. "Down!" I muttered aloud, and people standing near looked at me as if, perhaps, I had lost a friend in the mishap. I had, indeed. In dire time of need, perhaps at *the* turning point in my life, one road leading I knew not where, the other, as it proved and as I hoped, to a home and decent living—on such an occasion—that creaking, tired out ship bore me safely out of trouble to a welcome port

across the sea. If this is not friendship, if it be strange that I looked solemn and reminiscent in front of that bulletin board, then I know not what kind deeds and grateful remembrance thereof mean.

The journey to Berlin was a sorry undertaking. I started tired, my ticket read fourth-class, there were several confusing changes, and, for most of the journey, I was wedged in among a crowd of burly and scented Poles. Ordinarily, on a respectable train and with a third-class ticket, the journey from Bremen is about six hours. On my train it took close to sixteen, if not eighteen hours. A more humble home-coming could hardly be imagined, and I wasted no mental efforts in trying to increase the humility by imagining anything. At Celli there was some diversion in waiting an hour or two, and in listening to the gabble of a little Jewish tramp bound for Nürnberg. He had just come from America, he claimed, by way of England, having been boosted out of that country and across the North Sea by some alleged philanthropic agency, anxious apparently to relieve Great Britain of anything likely to increase the income tax. He was traveling afoot, and was full of the usual list of turnpike ghost-stories and "hand-outs." I told him some of my story to explain why I looked so dirty.

"They won't let you into Berlin," he declared, "looking like that. Can't you clean up some?" I tried once again, at a pump, to get rid of the steamer dust and grime, but this effort left no marked improvement in my appearance. Pretty soon the time for my

train drew near, and then the little wanderer displayed himself in his true colors.

" You're'n American," he said, " so'm I. Can't you help me out a little—five cents 'll do? "

Everything that begs and cringes in any nationality that I have ever known was present in that miserable boy's manner and voice. But he was a wanderer like myself, and I had a twenty-pfennig piece that I could just barely spare. He saw me feel in my pocket and hesitate. " For the sake of America," he whined, and foolish sentimentalist that I was, I gave him the money, although he already had more than I did. He said that the five cents was necessary to complete his evening fund for supper and lodging. I refer to this lad because he is typical of so many would-be Americans in distress, and on account of his utter lack of Road fellowship in bothering me—poorer than he was—when a complete townful of Germans was staring him in the face. The *international* Road is shamefully disgraced by these unscrupulous vagabonds.

My arrival in Berlin at one o'clock in the morning, dirty, clothes frayed and torn, and my exchequer so low that I could not afford even a "groschen" (two and a half cents) for a street-car ride, was sorrier, if that be possible than had been the journey from Bremen. One thing I had carefully preserved, however, my mother's address. Asking and feeling my way, laughed at by night street hawks and workmen, and watched suspiciously by policemen, I finally found the house. It was two o'clock in the morning now.

The *portier* answered my ring at the street door. I told him a tale such as he had probably never heard before nor will ever hear again, but my success was probably due more to my obvious foreign nationality than to the story. He knew that my people were foreigners, and he knew so little else of any account, as I learned later, that, in spite of my looks, he doubtless reasoned that Americans are permitted all kinds of eccentricities, and that I was what I claimed to be: a ship's engineer on short shore-leave with his luggage lost in transit. A lame "ghost story" at best, no matter how well delivered, but it won in my case.

"Well, I'll go up with you and see what the madame says," he finally declared, and up we marched, the good man looking at me furtively under his brows every now and then, evidently wondering whether or not he was making an awful mistake. My mother answered our ring.

"Who is there?" she asked in German, accustomed to the nocturnal calls of the telegraph messengers. I forgot my grammar, my looks, everything in fact except that on the other side of that door was one human being most likely to give me a night's lodging and to forgive.

"It's me!" I replied in English. The door opened, the *portier* was given his fee, and I entered a home which, next to the old brown house in our Middle West, has done more to make home seem worth while than any other that I have known.

CHAPTER IX

UNTER DEN LINDEN

THE Berlin of the late eighties was a very different city from the Berlin of to-day. There is probably no other Continental city which has undergone so many changes in the same period of time. When I wandered into the place nearly twenty years ago there were no electric cars—horses were still the exclusive motive power in the business streets; there was no rational direction of traffic—there isn't to-day in some parts; there were no automobiles that I can remember having seen; there were no great department stores such as now vie with those of New York; there was no such street lighting as there is to-day; and there were by no means so many Germans leaning on window sills and on the streets. Like Moscow, the place resembled a great overgrown village more than it did the capital of a great country. The people were provincial, the military upstarts often acted as if they thought the city had been built and was kept up for their exclusive entertainment, and strangers, particularly Americans, who ventured to dress as they do at home—white dresses in summer for ladies, for instance—were stared at as if they were a new species of human beings. In

one particular, however, the city has not changed, and probably never will, *i. e.,* in the amount of noise the Berliners are equal to when they are turned loose in the streets, afoot, in trains or in *Drosckken.* If it be true that the word *German,* philologically dissected, means a shouter in battle, then the word Berliner means two shouters talking about a battle. The incessant ya-yaing and nein-neining in the streets, the perspiring and nervous self-consciousness that comes to a large-boned populace suddenly advanced to *Welt-Stadt* significance, the reckless driving of the cabbies, the screams of the cabbies' victims, these all contribute to the present provinciality of the metropolis, in spite of the modern trolleys, automobiles, half-Londonized policemen, and taxameter cabs. Indeed, these very appurtenances of cosmopolitan, the crunching trolley, for instance, and the puffing "auto," accentuate very strikingly the undue emphasis which the town puts in noises, and are indicative of its lust for more. Twenty years ago the shouting and buzzing were not so bad, but the city is now making up for any silences that may have been observed at that time.

Part of the street roar and clamor is due to the unusual amount of small traffic in the streets, to the thousands and thousands of cabs, "commercial" tricycles and pushbarrows, all of which claim the right to play their part in the city's roar and bustle. But a much more conspicuous cause, if not the main one, is the fact that Berlin has grown up to Welt-Stadt prominence, overnight, as it were, and the good Berliners have not

yet untangled their feet sufficiently to keep an orderly pace under the new order of things. Two-thirds of them are still living under the old horse-car régime, and when they come to congested corners, where the trolley's clang and the automobile's " toff-toff " prevail, they very willingly lend a hand in increasing the general confusion.

At least this is the way the town impressed me a year or two ago, as compared with the easy-going city I first entered as a coal-passer, with honorable discharge papers in my pocket, and very little else. But far be it from me to dwell on this subject, for if there is any city in the world to which I ought to be grateful, it is Berlin. If it pleases the Berliners to shout their World City distinction from the housetops, as if fearful that it might otherwise escape notice, well and good; the noise sounds funny, that is all—particularly after London and New York.

I began my career in the town in a very " Dutch " ready-made suit of clothes, high-heeled shoes that could be pulled on at one tug like the " Romeo " slipper, a ready-made fly-necktie, and a hat the style of which may be seen at its best in this country in the neighborhood of Ellis Island; it was local color hatified indeed. While I lay asleep on the sofa in my mother's library, making up for the loss of sleep at sea, my mother went out and kindly made these purchases. Washed, dressed and fed, I may have looked " Dutch," but I was clean at least, and there was no dusky fireman about to order me to hurry " further mit de coals."

The family physician, a gentleman who has since come on to great things and is one of Berlin's most famous medical men, for some reason best known to himself examined me carefully to see how I had stood the journey. All that he could find out of the way was a considerably quickened heart action, which did not give him great concern, however. At that time the good man was just beginning to pick up English, and at our first meeting made me listen to his rendering of "Early to bed, early to rise," etc. A few weeks later, when making a professional visit on an American young lady, a new neighbor of ours, he was emboldened to give some advice in English—to compose an original sentence. He wanted the young lady to take more exercise, and this is how he told her to get it.

"Traw a teep inspiration, take t'ree pig shteeps across te floor, and ten expire." She pulled through her ailment splendidly.

In those days, the late eighties and early nineties, the American colony, as it was called, lived mainly in the western part of the city, in the neighborhood of the Zoölogical Gardens. The doctor, or professor, as he is now called, was for years the colony's physician, and many were the regrets when he gave up visiting us. We were still privileged to call at his office, but *hospital* work and Imperial patients made it impossible for him to call on us, although he kindly made neighborly visits in my mother's home as long as he remained in our street. He is now getting old and gray, but I found him as friendly and hospitable on my last visit to Ber-

lin, in spite of his fine villa, lackeys and carriages, as when he examined me for broken bones and twisted muscles after the coal-passing experience. I told him that I was on my way to Russia to study the heavily-advertised revolution. His face became grave, as of old when studying a case. "Be careful, my son," he cautioned me; "be very careful in Poland." The fatherly warning and the friendly interest brought back to my mind memories of the Berlin that I had known and in a way loved, the town that took me in and truly gave me another chance.

Nearly all American colonies abroad are but little more than camps. The campers tarry a while, for one reason or another—culture is what most of them claim to be seeking—and then fold their tents and pass on, those who remain behind having to get acquainted afresh with the new set of "culturists" who are sure to arrive in due time. In Venice there is an Anglo-Saxon camp which lays claim to ancient privileges and rights. In 1894–95 I spent four unforgettable months in the place, and got well acquainted with many of the campers.

"And how long have you been here?" was one of my questions on meeting an Englishman or fellow countryman, already beginning to plume myself on my long residence.

"Eighteen years, thank you!" was the answer I got on numerous occasions. My four months' sojourn dwindled to a very slight significance when set over against the old residents' record, but in spite of their long stay in the city they were, after all, campers. When

the Christmas holiday time came, for instance, they all spoke of going "home" to England. Venice was not their home. It was simply a desirable abiding place for the time being.

So it is wherever I have lived on the Continent. Barring a very few exceptions, the American colonists are transient residents that you have barely got acquainted with before they are off to some new tenting ground. Whether such "colossal" life is advantageous for the rearing of children, or not, is a question which each camping family decides for itself. In the case of young men, students for example, it has its advantages and disadvantages. In my own case I think it worked well for a time. It was not compulsory; I could have returned to America at any time. And it afforded me an opportunity to see how clean I could keep my record sheet in a community unacquainted with my previous devilishness. There was no local reason whatever why I should not hold my head just as high as anybody—a privilege which, I believe, goes a long way in explaining the pride I took in trying to deserve such a right.

It is a far cry from the stoke-room of an ocean liner to a refined home and unexcelled educational opportunities. No one who had seen me passing coal on the *Elbe* would ever have expected to meet me in the lecture rooms of the Berlin University, a few months later, a full-fledged student in the "philosophical faculty." And no one was more surprised at such a metamorphosis than the student himself.

It came about in this way: For a fortnight or so after

reaching Berlin there was little that I felt equal to beyond sitting in my mother's library, resting and reading. The little " Dutch " outfit made me presentable at least, and I was welcome to spend as much time as I liked browsing among the books. It seemed strange for a while, to sit there in comfort and ease, after the long tramp trip and the voyage on the *Elbe,* but I soon found myself fitting into the new arrangement without much difficulty. The coal-passing experience had exhausted my physical resources more than I had at first imagined, and for days lying on a lounge was about as much as I felt up to. It was during this period, I recall, that I read Livingstone's " Travels in Africa," George Eliot's " Daniel Deronda," some of John Stuart Mills' " Political Economy " and chapters in German history. I seemed to take as naturally to this selection in my reading as I had formerly taken to tramp trips—testimony, it seems to me, that two sets of forces were always at work within me. While poring over these books the Road, *Die Ferne,* and my former companionships seemed as foreign to my nature as they could possibly be; indeed, I frequently caught myself looking about the library, with its pleasant appointments, and wondering whether my wanderings were not, after all, simply a nightmare.

Friendly care and good food soon restored me to my usual good health, and then came walks, visits in and about the city, experiments in the language on long-suffering cabbies and tramway conductors, and a pleasant round of excursions in the environs. But nothing

as yet had been said or decided about my status in the new home, my mother apparently wanting me to recuperate first, and then suggest something myself. My twenty-first birthday was near at hand. I was no longer a boy with no responsibilities. My own sense of the fitness of things told me that it was high time for me to be up and doing, if I was going to be of any use to myself and the family. Yet, for the life of me, I could think of nothing more remunerative and honorable as a calling, than a woodchopper's life in the Black Forest. One of the coal trimmers on the *Elbe,* a " bankrupp " whose acquaintance I had made in the Hoboken cellar, had told me about this work in South Germany, and I had made up my mind to go there in case Berlin proved inhospitable. At best it was a makeshift job, but, for the time being, it was the best outlook that I had—at least so I thought. My mother, however, had no good opinion of this plan, and recommended that I consider the whole matter more fully.

I finally decided that another fair test of sea life should be made, not in the bunkers or stoke-room, but on deck, or wherever my services might be in demand. For some strange reason I had Egypt as an objective, perhaps on account of reading Livingstone's book. There was nothing particular that I can remember now to make Egypt any more attractive than Italy. But the name seemed to fascinate me, and I told my mother that if she would help me get to Liverpool, I believed that my rightful calling would come to light there. A number of days were taken up in discussing this new

project, but I persisted in thinking that Liverpool and Egypt had something wonderful in store for me. The good housing and nourishment had very probably awakened my *Wanderlust* again, but I know that the projected trip was not meant as a mere wandering in the dark; I honestly believed that something worth while would come of it. Looking back over the affair to-day, however, reminds me that probably the old desire to disappear to unknown parts and come back successful later was at work within me.

It was evidently decided that I should at least try my hand in Liverpool, and sufficient money for the trip and more was given to me. I left Berlin, thinking that I ought to come back at least an admiral of The Fleet, my mother feeling quite hopeful about me, yet regretting that I was not then willing to sound Berlin a little more, and see whether I could not fit in there.

As no particular harm came to me from the Liverpool experiment, perhaps it is not to be regretted to-day, but it seemed to accomplish very little at the time. I lodged in the Sailor's Home and tried to act and talk like a master of a ship, as long as my money lasted, but this was as far as I got toward becoming an admiral or in the direction of Egypt. The only " berth " offered me was in a Norwegian schooner as " cook's mate," or something like that, whatever " that " may mean. Liverpool itself, however, or rather those sections of it near the Sailors' Home and Lime Street, was faithfully explored and studied. One experience that I had may or may not have been worth while, according to the

different views of it that are permissible; but I thought, at the time, that it was valuable.

A runaway girl from Manchester, a pretty little thing who had lost her head over the theater, music halls and the ballet, crossed my path. She told me her story, a stencil-plate affair such as England is full of, and I told her mine, also about Egypt and my determination to be an admiral, if possible. She suggested that we combine our stories and funds, and grow rich and famous together. She was sure that she was fated to be an actress, a great one, and I was equally sure that something illustrious awaited me. "Alice"—this was the fair one's name—arranged the combination of funds very neatly; fortunately the bulk of mine were in safe keeping in the Sailor's Home. The whole amount, or rather the amount that I let her have, went for the cultivation of her voice and "stoil" in Lime Street concert halls; but she explained this selfishness away with a promise to finance me when she should be successful and I was passing the final examinations for the admiral's position. It is not unlikely that I might yet be struggling to get money for "Alice's" musical education if her charms had continued to please, but she fainted, or pretended to, in my arms, in public fashion one evening near the Home, and the spell was broken then and there. The fainting took place in an alleyway through which people passed to the rear of the Home and then on to another street. It came so unexpectedly that in spite of the girl's slight form she nearly toppled me over in clutching at me. Some newsboys saw me

holding her up and fanning her face with my hat. A squad of policemen, going on night duty, passed by and snickered.

"I'd doi for that goil, I would," one of the boys screamed, and the others made similar teasing remarks. "Alice" gradually recovered and grabbed my neck.

"Save me!" she cried. "Save me! I'm losin' all me high notes."

I "saved" her in double-quick fashion into a cab and sent her home to look for the high notes. I never saw her again, but five years later, when a friend and I were tramping in England, I asked about her in the concert halls in Lime Street, and finally found an old acquaintance who remembered her.

"Oh, that girl!" the acquaintance exclaimed. "She's got seven days. She's dotty. Thinks she's a primer donner. Good thing you an' her never went to housekeeping—ain't it?"

What with my experience with the capricious "Jeminy" of earlier days and with the screeching "Alice," housekeeping has not entered heavily into my life. I must thank "Alice," however, for showing me the folly of trying to be an admiral on a mere coal-passer's experience. Her light-fingered ingenuity and the resulting depletion of my funds also assisted in curing me of the Egyptian fever. The upshot of the trip to England was a hasty return to Germany to try something else—and to celebrate my coming of age. I meant that that event should mark a distinct change in my life, and in many ways it did.

CHAPTER X

BERLIN UNIVERSITY

IN the early nineties it was easier for foreigners to get into the Berlin University than it is now. To-day, I am told, certificates and diplomas from other institutions must be shown before the student can matriculate. In 1890, my matriculating year, all that was necessary to become enrolled as a student in good standing, was to have a twenty-mark piece in your pocket to pay the matriculation fee, and perhaps fifty marks more to pay for your first semester's lectures. Nothing was asked about your former studies or academic training. The university was open to all male foreigners over seventeen years of age. Germans had to show a *Gymnasium* certificate, but foreigners were accepted on their face value.

I can hardly suppress a smile now when I think of my entrance into this famous university. To be sure, I had the necessary amount of money and had long since passed the required age limit, but I am afraid that a stock-taking of my other qualifications would have left me woefully in the lurch had the other qualifications not been taken for granted. There were two years at an American college to my credit, it is true, and I had

perhaps done more *general* reading than even the average German student. But what else was there to entitle me to matriculation? Nothing, I fear, unless it was my mother's earnest wish that this take place.

On my return from England I was determined to let her suggest what was best for me to do, having made such a fiasco of the English venture, a suggestion and enterprise of my own. The university and its professors loomed up large in my mother's eyes. If she could only see me once started on such a career, she said, she thought that her cup of happiness would be full, indeed. She was set on having at least one academic child in the family, and my presence in Berlin and willingness to behave, renewed her hopes that this ambition was to be realized. Fortunate it was for her ambition and my sensibilities that the matriculation ceremonies were so simple. My German at the time had been selected principally from the coal-passers' vocabulary, but I was quick in overhauling it, and when ready to matriculate, knew as much of the language probably as does the average American student on first entering the university. On receiving my matriculation certificate from the rector—a very formidable document it was, written in Latin, which I had long since forgotten—shaking hands with him and receiving the faculty's welcome into the institution, I asked that my faulty German be pardoned.

"Certainly, Herr Studiosus, certainly," the rector assured me. "You are here to learn; we all are. So excuses are not necessary."

This was all the formality that was attached to the entrance ceremony. In five minutes, thanks to the rector, I had changed from a quondam coal passer to a would-be Doctor of Philosophy in the great Friedrich Wilhelm Universität, a royal institution. The importance of the royal protectorate over the university and the students never impressed me greatly, until a friend of mine had a wordy difference with one of the officials at the Royal Library. My friend was lame, having to use crutches. One day, when entering the room where borrowed books are returned, he proceeded to the desk with his hat on, being unable to remove it until freed of his armful of books. The officious clerk called his attention to the excusable breach of etiquette in none too polite language, adding: "You must remember that I am an Imperial official." "And do you remember," demanded my doughty Greek friend, "that I am an Imperial student."

I never had occasion to call attention to my "Imperialism" while in the university, but it was a kind of little joke that I was already to play if opportunity offered.

To take a Ph. D. at Berlin in my day at least one major study was required, and also two minors. Six semesters was the time necessary for preparation before one could *promoviren,* and an acceptable "Thesis" was absolutely necessary before examination was permissible. As a rule, a man with a well-written thesis and a fair mastery of his *major* subject succeeded in getting a degree. There were no examinations until the candi-

dates for degrees were ready to *promoviren,* to try for their Doctor's degree. At the end of three years, six semesters, such candidates were called before their professors and made to tell what they knew both in their *major* and *minor* studies. The examination was oral and alleged to be pretty minute, but I have been told by a Japanese, with a Ph. D. degree from Johns Hopkins University and preliminary study in German institutions, that, in his case, he would have preferred to take his chances in a bout with the Berlin examiners.

The significance of the title was by no means clear to me on matriculating in Berlin. In an indefinite sort of way I knew that it stood for certain learned acquirements, but what these amounted to puzzled me much at the time, and they do yet. Occasionally some visiting clergyman would preach for our local pastor in the American church, and I noticed that when a Ph. D. was a part of his title it was thought extremely good form to pay extra attention to his discourse.

I think this extra attention was partly due to the significance which our pastor gave to such decorations. He put much stress on learned institutions, their doctrines and teachings, and his discourses—many of them at least—might have been delivered in the university, so far as they patched up the spiritual wear and tear of his hearers. He was much given to quoting the professors of his university days, and, at his evening home-lectures, he could make himself very interesting telling us about the Germany of his youth and early manhood. One professor whose name he was continu-

ally mentioning was Tollock, or Toccoch, or something similar. I believe this gentleman had been noted as a theologian, but what I admired more than anything else was to hear our pastor roll out the name. His pronunciation of it seemed to me to incorporate the whole German language in one mouthful. With words, English or German, ending with a " d," the pastor had difficulty. In his prayers, for example, " Lord God " became " Lorn Gone," and I am afraid that some of us called the good man " Lorn Gone." He staid with us twenty years or more, I think, and he and his wife did much to get the money to build the present American Church. He very kindly took an interest in my selection of lectures at the university. For the life of me I cannot recall now why he or I chose Political Economy for my *major*. It may have been because my father had been much interested in this subject and had possessed a fine library on economic questions. It may also be accounted for by my cursory look into John Stuart Mill's book previous to leaving for Liverpool. Still, again, it may have been one of those haphazard selections which are resorted to in cases like mine; the subject was safe at least, and perhaps the good Doctor thought that studying might inculcate good principles in me about personal economy. Whatever the cause may have been, I was enrolled in *der philosophischen Facultät,* as an earnest delver into *Theoretische und praktische national-ekonomic.* I took two *privatim* twenty-mark lectures in my major, each semester that I was in the university. Professors Wagner and Schmol-

ler were my instructors in these courses. With Professor Wagner I never became well acquainted, but an interview that I once had with Professor Schmoller has always remained memorable. I had spent twenty marks semester after semester on his lectures and it did not seem to me that I was getting on very fast in my subject. Being a near neighbor of ours, I resolved one day to call on him in his villa and find out whether the trouble was on his side or mine. I had other uses for the semester twenty marks, unless he absolutely needed them. He asked me point blank what my preparation for university work had been previous to matriculating at Berlin, and how it had come about that Political Economy had been selected as my major. I told him the truth, even resorting to anecdotes about riding freight cars, to make myself clear. He laughed.

"And what have you in mind as a topic for a thesis?" he asked me. I had been four semesters in the university, and it was time for me to begin to think seriously about a thesis if I intended to *promoviren*. My thoughts were very scattered on this point, but I finally managed to tell the professor that vagrancy and geography seemed to have considerable in common, and that I contemplated a thesis which would consolidate my learning on these subjects. Again the professor laughed. He finally delivered himself of this dictum: "Vagrancy and geography don't combine the way you infer at any German university. Geography and Political Economy, however, make excellent mates, and are well worth studying together. Perhaps you

might find it easier to get your degree at one of the South German universities."

The insinuating suggestion at the last piqued me somewhat, but I continued to listen to Professor Schmoller for another long semester.

My minors—I hardly recall now what they were. One major and two or three minors were required, I believe, and one of the minors had to be the History of Philosophy. One semester in this subject was usually considered sufficient. So I must have listened to lectures on this subject, and I recall other courses in German Literature. But I am afraid that my professors at the time would be hard put to it, in looking over to-day the selected courses in my *Anmelde-Buch,* to make out what I was driving at. But in spite of all this confusion and floundering about, I was busy, after all, on my own private ends. I may not have got much from the lectures, but I came in contact with such men as Virchow, the pathologist; Kiepert, the geographer; Curtius, the Greek historian; Pfleiderer, the theologian; Helmholtz, the chemist, and I got glimpses of Mommsen. He was not reading in the university during my stay in Berlin, but he lived not far from my mother's home, and I used to see him in the street cars. He was a very much shriveled-up looking individual, and when sitting down looked very diminutive. He wore immense glasses, which gave his eyes an owlish appearance; I saw him to the best advantage one afternoon when we were riding alone in a street car through the Thiergarten. He had a corner in the front, and I had

taken one in the rear. I hardly noticed him at first, and had opened a book to read, when suddenly the old gentleman began to mumble to himself and gesture. "Ya, ya, so ist es," I could hear him say. "So muss es sein," and he flourished his right hand about as if he were speaking to a collection of Roman senators. What it was that was "so," and why it had to be "so," I could not find out. Perhaps he was arguing a deep polemical point with an imaginary adversary, and perhaps he was merely having a little tiff with the police. He was the proud father of twelve children, more or less, and no Berlin landlord, so the story runs, would rent him a flat. He consequently lived in Charlottenburg, where, I have heard, that he told the police what he thought of them and their regulations.

The most interesting interview that I had with any of my professors was with Virchow. At the time of the interview I was corresponding for a New York newspaper intermittently, and, one day, word came from the editor that a "chat" with Virchow on the political situation would be "available." (This word available formerly troubled me a great deal in my encounters with editors, but I have at last come to terms with it. When an editor uses it, it pays to look into a good dictionary and see how many different applications it has. Its editorial significance is most elastic.) Virchow kindly granted me an interview and told me some interesting things about his fight for Liberal ideas. But he was most entertaining when talking "science." Our political chat finished, he asked me whether I was

interested in Anthropology, advising me that the local Anthropological Society was to have a meeting that same evening, and that I would be welcome. I told him that I was interested in Anthropology in so far as it threw light on Criminology. The old gentleman must have mistaken my meaning, or I did not know myself what I was trying to say, for my reply startled him into what seemed to me unwonted nervous activity. During the political chat he had been very quiet and calm, talking even about Bismarck in a rather subdued voice. But when I ventured to connect Anthropology and Criminology, barely mentioning Lombrosso's name, it was as if some one had thrown a stone through the window. Virchow jumped up from his chair, and cried: "There you are on false ground. Let me give you a pamphlet of mine that will put you right," and he rushed into his adjoining study for a paper that had something to do with cells, etc. I might understand it to-day, but it read like Sanscrit at the time. "There," said the little man, handing me the brochure. "That will give you my ideas on that subject." In other men this proceeding might have indicated conceit. With Virchow it was merely a friendly desire to set me right on a matter which he had thought a million times more about than I possibly could have. He seemed literally to feel aggrieved that anyone should be in the dark about a matter on which he had tried to shed light.

Later, when showing him a written copy of our political interview, I had to look him up in his famous den, in the Pathological Institute, I think it was. The

room was so full of skulls, bones and " pickled " things that it was all one could do not to knock something over when moving about. I had to leave the manuscript with him for correction. He sent it to me a few days afterward with neatly written marginal notes in his own handwriting. Of all the men I met at the university, he was distinctly the most famous and affable.

His famous political antagonist, Bismarck, a man that Virchow seemed to hate, judging by his manner when discussing him, I saw but once. It was not long before his dismissal from office, and he was returning from the Emperor's palace, where he had gone to give him birthday congratulations. I was standing in front of the Café Bauer on the Unter den Linden just as Bismarck's carriage came by. I shall always remember his strong face and remarkable big eyes, but this was about all that I saw. A woman recognized Bismarck just as I did, and ran toward his carriage, crying: " Oh, Prince Bismarck! Prince Bismarck! " There was something in her manner which made one think that she wanted to ask some favor of the great man, and had been waiting for his appearance. The mournful note in her voice might have meant anything—a son in prison, a dying soldier husband, a mere request for bread. The driver of the horses was taking no chances, however, and the great chancellor was whisked away toward Wilhelm Strasse.

The diminutive and modest Virchow could reconstruct our notions about pathology and medicine and at the same time be a great Liberal, but he could not tol-

erate Bismarck. The monstrous chancellor could reunite Germany, dictate her foreign policy for years, and hold his own, in and out of parliament, as a master mind, but he could not associate with Virchow. Two great Germans, both iconoclasts and builders, both dwellers in the same city, and both much admired and criticised—but they needed separate sides of the street when abroad—a fact, by the way, which goes much to help out the other fact demonstrating German *Kleinlich Keit*—smallness.

When all is said and done about my university career I think that the good it did me was accomplished mainly in the Royal Library and in the Thiergarten—a natural park in the center of the city, where I could invite my soul comfortably in the winter, say at ten degrees above zero, and in summer at about seventy degrees of heat—all this—*a la* Fahrenheit, by the way, who has no following in Germany, either zero-wards or otherwise. The library advanced me ten books at a draw in any language I felt equal to, and the Thiergarten helped me to ponder over what I had read and did not understand. Certainly no professor ever felt more learned than I did when I tramped through the park to my home, with the ten books slung over my shoulder. My mother used to love to see me come into the house after this fashion, and even my fox-terrier, Spicer, put on a learned look peculiarly her own when she deigned to observe my studious tendencies. More anon about this almost human little creature, but I must say right here that, in her early days, she did not take kindly to my

" shortening-up " habits. She believed in beer, much food and exercise, Uferlos pow-wowing.

What it was, in the Library or Thiergarten, that switched me, when reading, from Political Economy to Africa, Livingstone, Burton, Speke and Stanley, it is a little difficult to explain. In the final analysis I suppose it was mere temperament. By my third semester I knew ten times more about Africa than I knew about my own country, and an unfathomable number of times more than I ever will know about Political Economy. Burton was the man I particularly took to, and to this day he remains on a very high pinnacle in my estimation of men.

This kind of reading naturally did not bring me any nearer my Ph. D. But it taught me to keep quiet, dodge *Die Ferne,* and to take an interest in what other men had done—to remember that all the traveling in the world was never intended to be done by me. Of course, I had dreams of becoming an explorer, but they were harmless arm-chair efforts, that gave my mother no anxiety, and were profitable in so far as I seriously studied geography. Possibly, had a berth in an exploring expedition been offered me, I should have been tempted to take it; but no such opportunity came to hand.

My companions in the university were nearly all *Streber,* young men who were determined to *promoviren.* A more mixed collection of friends I have never had. My most intimate " pal " was a Japanese, the others next intimate were a Greek, a German-American,

a British-American, some *bona fide* Teutons, and my dog Spicer—the latter being in the university by proxy, so to speak. In the early semesters we did pretty much what all students at German universities do. Here in the United States there are minute observers of college morals who would have said that we were all bound devil-wards. We attended *Kneipen,* spent our Sundays in the Grunewald, and would *schwänzen*—omit attendance at lectures, when convenient. But all of my friends except one have done well. The unfortunate exception was probably the most strenuous *streber* in the company. He took his degree with all sails set for a promised professorship at home, went home, was disappointed in what he had been led to think he was to teach, became discouraged and despondent, and finally tossed himself in front of a train. Poor "Zink"! He had studied History and wanted to give lectures about it. The western college trustees, who had promised him a chair in History, insisted on his teaching Grammar also, or some other subject that he had paid no attention to since college days, and his sense of the fitness of things revolted. He had specialized honestly and fearlessly, and he desired to continue as a specialist. The college trustees wanted a complete faculty in one or two men, and "Zink" would not submit. If any man deserved fairer treatment, this old university friend did.

I believe that Spicer, my fox-terrier, is the only other member of the class that has quit the game completely. She stayed with my family for nine years, never

comprehending the Germans as a people—she was English—and apparently never wanting to. Pilsner beer was the only German product she would succumb to. Three saucerfuls after each afternoon tramp constituted her portion. As she never staggered, and never misbehaved herself otherwise under the Pilsner influence, I think it agreed with her. In saying that she succumbed to the three saucerfuls, I merely mean that she knew when she had had enough.

If I could tell what "Pizey," as she was called later, meant to my family in ways that are dear and affectionate, and what she stood for in the "Colony," a great dog book would be the result. She came to us in a basket, after a serious tossing in the North Sea—a fat, pudgy little thing, full of John Bullism and herself. My mother and younger sister brought her to Berlin, and mother presented her to me, in the same language as in former days when she had given me "Major"—"Josiah, I've brought you a dog!" I rejoiced at twenty-two over such a gift as much as I did in my early teens. Little did I reckon then what it means to train a pup in a Berlin flat. With "Pizey" I would gladly go through the whole business again, but it is a task I feel that I must save my countrymen against. Even in Oskaloosa there are trying months ahead of him who rears a pup three flights up. (Fire escapes don't help a bit.)

"Pizey's" main interests were her own short tail and her long-tailed pups. When mother had nothing better to offer her guests by way of entertainment,

" Pizey " was requisitioned, called into the parlor and made to chase her stub of a tail. If her guests were looking for other amusement they were disappointed, but " Pizey " wasn't, and I think that mother enjoyed the fracas. She once told the family physician that under no circumstances, no matter whether " Pizey " committed *lesé majesté,* would she destroy " Pizey," because she reminded her of Josiah, " when he was away from home."

" Pizey's " distinction as a member of the " Colony " lay almost entirely in her disregard of the Malthusian dream. She increased the Anglo-German *entente* by at least forty-seven little " Pizeys." Some of her progeny found their way into American homes and are trying to do right—perhaps a half-dozen. The remaining forty-one are *auf der Wanderschaft.*

" Pizey's " death was mysterious. I had long since left Berlin, and heard only infrequently about her. Finally the entire family moved away, and the dog was left in the old home, but under a new régime; she absolutely refused to emigrate. They say that she was stricken with asthma, and had to be put out of the way. I only hope that she was put out of the way in a square deal. The German scientists are very much given to dissecting dogs like " Pizey " while they are yet alive. If any German scientist perpetrated such an outrage on Spicer, I trust that his science will fall to pieces—certainly those parts of it based on " Pizey's " evidence.

CHAPTER XI

WANDERINGS IN GERMANY

YEARS and years ago, when Luther was giving us, or rather demanding of us, two strong legs and an obstinate " No " when it was our duty to say " No," there were thousands of young men in Germany who had wheelbarrows, and, I trust, the two strong legs; they were called *Handwerksburschen,* traveling apprentices, a name that remains intact with their counterpart of our day. The apprentices in honorably quitting their masters—I fear, sometimes before honor had become a definite part of their moral baggage—would put their bits of tools into the wheelbarrows, the masters would give them a *glückauf,* and away the young men would go over Europe, studying their trades in different countries, and getting acquainted with life in towns, villages and fields. In the main, they were earnest inquirers of their kind, seeking comparative wisdom and a friendly acquaintance with the *Chaussee.*

Luther has long since gone, and with him the *Handwerksbursch* of his time. The *Chaussee* has given away to the fourth-class railway car, and the wheelbarrow and kit of tools to a stingy knapsack. The *Handwerks-*

bursch still has two legs, as a rule, but he hates to use them.

Such good nature and fellowship as must have prevailed among Luther's traveling apprentices could also be found among the students of the time. They took to the *Chaussee,* saw men, cities and things, and their vacation over, returned to their lectures and books. Like the *Handwerksbursch,* however, they have found their accounting with the present, and to-day are quite as much at home in the fourth-class car as were their predecessors on the *Chaussee.*

In course of time it came my turn to make one of the students' tours of Germany. The *Semester* was over, a friendly companion was at hand, and, for a *Rundreise* excursion, we had sufficient money in our pockets. It may or may not have been a sop to *Die Ferne* that I undertook this jaunt, but I think now that it was merely a well-timed outing in order that *Die Ferne* should not be consciously considered. Here again, as so often before and since, credit must be given to my mother. She seemed to know to the hour almost, the time when it was necessary for me to jump out of harness and take to the open again.

My companion on this first exploration of Germany was a gentleman considerably older than myself. He was a stalwart Norwegian, perhaps forty years of age, with a burly blond beard, a great "bundle of hair," as the tramps say, and a pugnacious belief in the prohibition of the liquor traffic. Physically, Nietzsche's *guter grosser blondes Mensch* was found in him to a nicety.

Some months before my arrival in Berlin, he appeared at my mother's door one evening and said in a western nasal drawl: "Glad to meet you. Believed in your sister-in-law's principles, and thought I'd come around and call."

My mother saw in him at first merely the typical Prohibitionist with a long rehearsal of the reasons why, if need be, one should go dry in a waterless, but alcoholic neighborhood. A partial rehearsal there was, and then the tall, blond man from "Minnesoty" got to talking most interestingly about the university, philosophy, religion, Norway—and Ibsen. He spoke also of his native language, of literature in general, and of men in "Minnesoty" who were trying to make a new Norwegian literature.

Ibsen was much discussed at the time, and "Nora" was the talk of the town. It had become almost an affair of state whether Nora did right in leaving her home, and decidedly a matter of etiquette whether a husband should, or should not, offer a disappearing wife an umbrella on a rainy night. (The "Doll's House," as I saw it, presumed a storm outside.) Ibsen was living in Munich in those days.

Our friend, the Norwegian, wrote to Ibsen, and asked him whether he would receive two Americans anxious to pay their respects to him. It had been decided that the Norwegian and I should make *Rundreise* together, and Munich was included in our itinerary. Ibsen replied to the Norwegian's letter in very neat handwriting, that he was usually at home in the Maximilian strasse

at eleven o'clock, and that callers usually looked in on him at that hour. There was no conventional etiquette about the note; we were not even told that we should be welcome. The small missive might have been a dentist's " time card " so far as it expressed any sentiment. But scrupulously to the point it certainly was. Later Ibsen told us that so many people wrote to him that he had been compelled to boil his correspondence down as much as possible.

The journey to Munich in company with the Norwegian was very similar to all students' outings, and need not be described in detail here. The talk with Ibsen, our unheard of abstemiousness in restaurants, and the pains that we were at to see everything on a five pfennig tipping basis, were the only special features of the trip.

On leaving Berlin we resolved to go as far as our allowance would permit, into the Tyrol if possible, and we thought that our mileage could be prodigiously increased if we drank water with our meals, and " looked the other way " when more than five pfennigs was wanted as *Trinkgeld.* The Norwegian never once swerved in living up to this programme, but I fell from grace at times. The looks and " faces " that we got from guides, palace lackeys and waiters were specimens that, could we have drawn them, would make a very interesting gallery to look over to-day. But, alas! neither one of us could sketch, all that we have now is the remembrance. During the six weeks or more that we traveled we saw disappointment, distrust, hatred

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and pugnaciousness in all the different shades and colorings which the German countenance is equal to. The Norwegian said that he enjoyed such sights, but there were moments when I begged off, and tipped as I saw fit. It made no difference to the Norwegian, however, whether the service rendered was a two-hour chaperoning through a great castle, or a mere response to a question. Five pfennigs remained his limit in the tipping line to the end, and I doubt whether his entire bill on this score came to over three marks. His non-alcoholic régime nearly got us into serious trouble in Nürnberg. As had been our custom in other towns, we had selected a modest restaurant at the noon hour, and called for the regular meal. Although we did not order beer, it was served to us, but left untouched. When we came to pay our reckoning we called the waiter's attention to the beer item, saying that we would not pay it as the beer had not been asked for. Such a hubbub and pow-wowing as then began I have never seen over two glasses of beer. The proprietor came, the other waiters also, and even some of the guests labored with us in the matter.

"But it is the custom, *Meine Herren,*" the landlord kept saying, to all of which the Norwegian returned a determined "No." It might or might not be the custom, and whether it was or not, did not make a particle of difference; he was not going to pay for something that he had neither wanted nor asked for.

The upshot of the arguing was that we picked up our grips and started to leave. The burly proprietor snatched my bag away from me in the hallway. The

Norwegian sprang at him with an oath—the first and last I ever heard him use.

"Damn you!" he hissed through his teeth. "I'll break every bone in your body," and I think he would have fulfilled the contract had the proprietor given him a chance. The latter dropped my bag, and fled back into the restaurant for reënforcements. But, by the time he was ready for war again, we were in the street, and the landlord contented himself with calling us swindlers and pigs. I make no doubt that later there was a protracted discussion in the restaurant about the matter, and that for many a day afterward the *Starumgäste*, who had witnessed the affair, made beery conjectures as to our nationality and education. Whatever their final decision may have been, the Norwegian had carried his point. Alone, I doubt whether my independence would have been so assertive, but I was glad at the time to have witnessed a successful revolt against the tyrannical German *Getränkezwang*.

What Ibsen, whom we saw in his home a few days later, would have said to this episode, is hard to conjecture. Very possibly he might have told us that we were in the wrong in going to such a place, that we should have sought out a vegetarian eating-place—the teetotaler's refuge, when the *Bierzwang* is to be avoided. He very frankly told us, however, what he thought of Prohibition as a cure-all for the liquor traffic problem. The Norwegian had asked his opinion in the matter and he got it. This is about what Ibsen said:

"You can't make people good by law. Only that

which a man does of his own free will and because he knows that it is the *right* thing to do, counts in this world. Legislating about morals is at best a sorry makeshift. Men will have to learn to legislate for themselves without any state interference, before human conduct is on a right basis."

This deliverance on the part of Ibsen came in its turn with other topics on which he expressed himself during our interview with him. We had called at his home at the suggested hour—eleven—and had been immediately shown into the parlor, I think it was. Pretty soon Ibsen strolled in. I should have recognized him without trouble anywhere. The long, defiant hair pushed back from his forehead, the silky side whiskers, the inevitable spectacles, the tightly closed lips, the long coat—these things had all been brought out prominently in his photographs, and were unmistakable. At the time he was the most famous literary man I had ever met, and he was easily the most talked about dramatist in Europe. I was much impressed by this fact, and for the moment probably looked at him as if it was the last chance to see a great public character that I was to have. The Norwegian took the event more calmly, walking up to Ibsen with his great hand outstretched as if to an older brother. The two men looked each other well in the eyes—their eyes were strikingly similar in color and shape—passed greetings in Norwegian, and then I was introduced.

"And what is it that you want?" Ibsen asked bluntly enough, motioning to the sofa, he himself taking a

chair. From his manner and curtness of speech he might have been taken for a doctor during calling hours. He was friendly after a fashion, but the fashion was as if he had long since finished with making intimate acquaintances, and henceforth meant to hold the world at a distance. He looked " business " to the last degree.

As the conversation progressed he thawed a little, and was not quite so reserved. But throughout our two visits with him—there was a second call on the next day —he at least *answered* questions as if he were on the witness stand, and had been cautioned by his counsel not to overstate things.

When questioning us as well as when volunteering an opinion which was not in direct reply to a query, he was not so painfully cautious.

The Norwegian had prepared a list of questions threateningly long, to put to the old gentleman, but he religiously went through it from beginning to end. He quizzed him about everything and everybody, it seemed, from Prohibition, the Kaiser, Bismarck, Scandinavia, Russia and general European politics, to family matters, his manner of writing, his forthcoming play, and about numberless obscure passages in his earlier dramas. Ibsen took the blows as they fell, dodging, as I have said, when he felt like it, but receiving them in the main quite stolidly. Many of the questions were killed almost before they were delivered, by a frown or a gesture. Speaking about the alleged obscure passages in his books, he said: " They may be there, but I did not mean them

to be obscure. For a time I used to answer letters from persons who wanted me to explain this or that sentence, but I had to give up the job—it got so enervating. I make my words as plain as I know how. Most of my readers comprehend me, I trust."

Ibsen used Norwegian when fencing with my companion, but with me he very kindly resorted to German, asking me in quite a fatherly way about my family, my travels and studies and my opinion of Germany. Occasionally he would smile, and then we saw the man at his best. Crabbed and curt he might be at times, but behind that genial smile there was without doubt a very kind nature, and I was sure of it then and have been ever since. In the years that are to come much will be written about Ibsen, the writer, the pessimist, the sociological surgeon, and what not, but nothing that has been or is still to be written about him will ever succeed in revealing to me the man, as that friendly chat in his home in Munich. An experience, by the way, which may possibly prove that my friend, Mr. Arthur Symons, was correct in an argument we had some years ago in London, about personal interviews or "sittings" with famous people, particularly writers. At the time I advanced the opinion that writers, if they were worth while at all, proved their worth best in what they wrote, and not in what they said, that their books and not their physical presence were what ought to interest. Symons held that he had never read an author who would not have been *more* interesting to him (Symons) had he been able to meet and talk with him. More about Symons later on.

His books and personal friendship are both valuable to me, but for very different reasons. I seldom think of Symons, the man, when I read his essays and verses, and I only infrequently think of his books, or of him as a literary man at all, when we are together.

CHAPTER XII

A VISIT TO LONDON

IN the autumn of 1892 my university days were interrupted by a visit to London. Political economy, as taught and written in German, was becoming more and more of a puzzle to me, in spite of the fact that I had made valuable progress in picking up and using German colloquial expressions. I could berate a cabby, for instance, very forcefully, but somehow I could not accustom my ear to the academic language of Professors Schmoller and Wagner. I finally persuaded my people that if I was to continue to explore political economy I ought to be allowed to come to terms with it in my own vernacular, at least until I knew something about it separate from German, which, at that time, was quite as much a study to me as political economy itself. My arguments in this matter eventually prevailed, and I was sent off to London to read up on the subject in the British Museum. That this reading was a good thing in its way is doubtless true, and the six months spent in London at that time I have always counted among the *Streber* months of my career. Perhaps I devoted more time than was right to geography and the books of travelers and explorers, but I pegged

away at my major too, after a fashion, at times covering my desk with books on the subject. If many volumes stacked up in front of a reader make a savant in the British Museum, then I deserved a place in the front rank.

But with all my good intentions, reading and note-taking, the main good that London did for me, was accomplished outside of the somber pile in Bloomsbury. The Museum was principally a place in which to retreat when the life in the streets seemed likely to unduly excite my *Wanderlust*. There I could also read about many of the things that interested me in London itself.

Colonization was the special subject I was supposed to be looking into, but Dr. Richard Garnett, the official at the Museum who gave me my reader's ticket, could never get over the notion that I meant "composition," when telling him the subject I was to take up. Three times I insisted that it was *colonization*, but whether the good man was deaf, or determined that I should tackle composition, I never found out. My friend, Arthur Symons, introduced me to him and distinctly heard me say colonization, but this did not help matters. The good doctor insisted on showing me about the reading room, pointing out the general reference books which he thought would facilitate my acquaintance with composition. We frequently greeted each other in the corridors afterwards, but the doctor kindly refrained from quizzing me concerning my reading, and probably had quite forgotten what it was all about anyhow—a matter of conjecture in my own mind on occasions.

My most intimate friend during this first visit to London was Symons, and I have to thank him for putting me on the track of many interesting people and experiences. I went to him with an introduction from Berlin, where he visited me later on. In 1892 he was living in Fentin Court in The Temple, Mr. George Moore being a close neighbor in Pump Court, I think. Both men took hold of my imagination very much, being the first English writers that I learned to know. With Moore I had only slight conversations, but I remember now that he evinced considerable interest in my "tramp material." Indeed, ten years after our first meeting he reminded me of an adventure which I, at one time, had related to him.

Symons, on the other hand, I saw very frequently, and I might as well accuse him right away of being my literary god-father, if I may be said to deserve one. Whether he realized it at the time or not, it was the writer's atmosphere which he let me into, that made me ambitious to scribble on my own account.

One day he told me that he had received fifteen pounds for an article for *The Fortnightly*.

"Fifteen pounds!" I mumbled to myself on the way back to my lodgings. "Why, that sum would keep me here in London over a month." Later, in Berlin, I experimented for the first time with the effects of an article by me in a magazine. Symons' wonderful fifteen pounds were to blame. I sent the paper, a short account of the American tramp, to *The Contemporary*. It was accepted. In a few days I received page proofs of the

article, and in the next number it was published. No youthful writer ever had his horizon more ambitiously widened than mine was when that article was printed and paid for. I assured the editor instanter that my tramp lore was inexhaustible, and begged him to consider other submissive efforts on my part. He intimated in his reply that submission was a fine quality, but that *The Contemporary* did not confine its pages to trampology, and that his readers had had enough of that subject for the time being.

The little back room in the Crown Tavern, near Leicester Square, where a number of the young writers in London congregated at night, in my time, has given way to much more pretentious quarters. Symons and I had got into the habit of taking nightly walks about town, leading nowhere in particular at the start, but interrupted usually, for an hour at least, about half-past eleven at "The Crown." The place itself never meant much to me as a rendezvous because I have never been able to get enjoyment out of a back-parlor pushed up against a bar. Separate, each institution has its amenities but Englishmen seem fond of a combination of the sort mentioned.

Two of the young men who forgathered at "The Crown" in 1892 have passed on for keeps—Lionel Johnson, the author of "The Art of Thomas Hardy," and the personal statement to me that he knew every inch of Wales; and Ernest Dowson, a man who lived in a queer, rambling old storehouse on the docks—a posses-

sion of his own, and who knew much about London that he should have been allowed to tell.

The gatherings in the back parlor were comparatively innocent little intentions upon life and literature. I got good out of them in a number of ways, and might have benefited by them more had my intentions been more distinctly literary. What Swinburne, Pater, Wilde, Verlaine and others were doing and saying was not half so interesting to me as what some haphazard pick-up might say to me and Symons, during our stroll after the Crown meeting was over. On one occasion, however, an Irish journalist, who was present, succeeded in getting me patriotically indignant. He had spent the afternoon in Westminster Abbey, happening, among other things, upon Longfellow's bust.

"I can't see," he said, at the end of his account of his afternoon, unmistakably referring to the Longfellow bust, "why the Americans can't bury their dead at home." It was on the tip of my tongue to ask him why the Irish couldn't keep their alive at home, when some one said: "Soda, please," and the difficulty was both watered and bridged over.

I suppose that "The Crown" meetings were mutual admiration parties of a kind, but of an innocent kind. I recall a callow youth (who had squandered his patrimony in Paris), with a slender volume of reminiscent verse, button-holing me and saying: "Really, you know —— (a member of the company) is a genius. His command over vocables is something stupendous." Blank has since made a name for himself, but I remem-

ber looking at him at the time, innocently wondering whether he was a genius, and, if so, what vocables were.

But in spite of the ready assistance offered to all hands to think well of themselves, the gatherings usually netted one something worth while in the end, either in criticism or incident. They call to mind now a series of gatherings held a number of years later in New York among a collection of American writers. And this thinking of the two combinations reminds me of what George Augustus Sala once said to me in Rome. I had gone to him, according to agreement, to ask him what he had to say to a young man, anxious to do well in journalism, about writing in general. He was sitting at breakfast when I dropped in at his hotel, very much surrounded by macaroni and the local newspapers.

"And what are your pleasures?" Sala began without warning, as if I had gone to him for medical advice.

I was so upset by this beginning of things that, for the life of me, I could not think for a second or two what my pleasures were. I finally managed to say that I enjoyed whist.

"Stop it," said Sala, his Portuguese eyes fairly boring through me. "Stop it. Whist means cards, and cards mean gambling. Stop it."

After a pause, "What are the other pleasures?" If whist meant gambling, I reasoned that tobacco must premise opium. However, I admitted that I liked tobacco.

"Not strange—not strange," said Sala. "One who

writes needs a smoke. What else? Are you a woman-hater?"

"No, sir, I'm not," I replied most emphatically. Sala looked at me queerly, but did not pursue the subject. I had been introduced to him by a man who, wrongly or rightly, had the reputation of saying cross things about women.

"Do you drink?" Sala continued in a moment.

"Yes, when I feel like it."

"*Stop it, stop it.* Drinking means boozing, boozing means busting, and busting means hell—hell, young man, remember that."

There was a pause, during which Sala looked out of the window as if he had taken my pulse and was deciding how much faster it could beat before I must die. Pretty soon he turned my way, and, after some general advice about coming to an early decision as to whether I meant to be a purely descriptive writer or not, delivered himself to this statement: "If you settle in London as a journalist, you'll be a drudge. If you try New York, you'll be a boozer—*unless,*" and again the Portuguese eyes shot at me, "*you keep out of the rut.*"

In reviewing my past experiences I have often thought of this talk with Sala when comparing the two different sets of writers I learned to know in London and New York. Offhand I should say that honors were even between them as regards the virtues, any advantage in this particular falling, if there was any, to the Englishmen on account of the early closing hours in England.

It was after the celebrated closing hours that Symons and I often had some of our most entertaining strolls. Symons was inveterately on the scent for " impressions and sensations," while I found happiness merely in roving. I suppose that I received impressions and sensations of their kind just as well as Symons did, but somehow when I began to describe them they did not seem to have enough literary dignity to belong in the same class with those that Symons could tell about and later describe in print.

One night, we separated, each to wander as long as he was interested, and in the morning to compare reports. It so happened that neither of us on this particular occasion saw enough that we had not enjoyed together on other jaunts, to make the undertaking very amusing. But we both agreed that such explorations could be made uncommonly entertaining by a literary artist, if he would honestly tell what he had stumbled upon.

At another time we undertook a more audacious exploit—a 'bus ride to the city limits, or into the country as far as the schedule allowed, and then a tramp into the Beyond, as long as we could hold out. We took the first 'bus we saw bound well into the country. It started from Liverpool Street Station; Symons thought that it was headed east, but neither of us was sure, the road twisted and turned so. Nightfall found us pushing on bravely afoot, Symons glorying in the beautiful moonlight and " sensation " of being " at sea " on land, while I got pleasure out of Symons' romantic appreciation of a trip which reminded me very mundanely of other noc-

turnal tramps at home. Midnight stopped us at an inn. One of Symons' shoes was giving him trouble, and the romance of the adventure was growing a little dim. We were dusty, tired and, I suppose, suspicious-looking. The innkeeper hesitated before he would let us in, and we had to explain how simple and innocent we were. In the morning, having found our bearings to the extent that we learned we were headed toward the North Sea —we refused to listen to anything more minute than this—we went blithely on our way once more, happy in the consciousness that, for the moment we were carefree, and bound for "any old place" that took our fancy. But, alas! Symons' shoe got to annoying him again, and his spirits began to droop. By ten o'clock they were plainly at half-mast. His foot had become very painful, forcing him to sit down by the side of the road. The jolly adventurer of the night before and early morning had suddenly changed into an irascible literary man "on the road." He said nothing about art, sentences or vocables. He said nothing about anything but the pain in his foot was giving him. Blind travels into the countryside took on a different aspect. It was The Temple for Symons, and just as soon as a train could take him there. That fine indefiniteness of the evening in the moonlight—that joyous keeping in step with *Die Ferne*—the temptress into the Beyond—that dreamy, happy, careless chatting about the great city left behind—these things had vanished; our stroll to the North Sea or the North Pole, or wherever it was that we dreamed we might get to, was at an end. I have

seldom known innocent bucolic intentions—we thought ours were bucolic—dissipate into thin air so unconcernedly. But as Symons said about many of our trips together, " the best part of them comes when you look back over them in front of a good fire," and so he will probably smile and look pleasantly reminiscent when he comes across this reminder of our aimless jaunt into Essex.

I think he will also smile on reading my version of the Berlin-Havre expedition. He had spent a month with me in my home in Berlin, where, as usual, he dug all over the city for impressions and sensations—" impreshuns and sensashuns " was the way they were finally called in my household. When it came time for him to return to London, he decided to accompany my sister and me as far as Havre on our sail from Hamburg to New York. He had never been on an ocean liner, and thought that the new experience would recompense him for the " sensashuns " he failed to gather in Berlin. Besides, as we figured it out, he could get to London a little cheaper this way. We were all pretty poor at the time, and economy counted for a great deal in " sensation " researches. I was bound for America to see if I could not interest some publisher in printing articles and stories about tramps.

Down the Elbe from Hamburg, in fact all of the first day we were at sea, Symons thought he had seldom had a more enjoyable time. The sea was quiet, the weather was balmy, and there was a great deal to eat. The next morning the sea had kicked up somewhat. I found

Symons at breakfast time on deck, holding fast to a railing running around the smoking room. His face was wan and colorless, and he plainly showed that he had had his fill of " sensashuns " for the time being.

" Strange motion, isn't it? " he murmured, gripping the railing afresh. " Never fancied anything like this. I shall be glad to see Havre."

We made that port the following day. Symons was to ship from Havre to Southampton, after having a look at Havre. I learned that our boat was going to be delayed for twenty-four hours on account of repairs—she seemed to be repairing all the way to New York—and that all three of us could go ashore for a stroll. Symons' exchequer had, by this time, got perilously low—he had the price of his ticket to London and, perhaps, two francs over. All of us found some forgotten German coins of small denominations in our pockets, and proceeded to an exchange office. No transaction at the Bank of England ever seemed more important than did this one with the French money dealer. Symons was to be the beneficiary, and we higgled and haggled over the values of our *groschen* and *sechser* as if millions were at stake. In the end we managed to increase his holdings by two francs—that was all, and it was absolutely all that we could afford. Symons was so glad to be in the right mood for *terra firma* sensations again that the two francs looked like two hundred to him. At any rate he did not seem to care how large or small the sum was—he thanked the gods prodigiously that he was strong enough merely to walk.

We smuggled him on board for supper, and finally left him, as we thought, until we should again be in England, as our boat was to sail early the next morning, the repairs having been accelerated, so we were told. Symons was to spend the night and next day ashore, waiting for the Southampton boat. The next morning found our ship still tied up. We were free to go ashore again, and have another "last" meal in a restaurant. As we strolled up the main street, whom should we meet striding proudly down the thoroughfare but Symons, his brown gossamer sailing merrily after him.

"Fancy this!" he exclaimed on seeing us. "How jolly! But do you think your boat ever will get started again."

Then he told us of the wonderful impressionistic night he had spent.

"After bidding you good-by," he explained, "I strolled back to Frascati's. The moon was up, and I felt like strolling. When Frascati's closed I walked along the beach for a while—it was a perfect night for 'sensations.'

"At last I got sleepy. There was a bathing machine near-by, and I thought it would be a jolly adventure to spend the rest of the night in it. Besides, I wanted to economize.

"I don't know how long I had been dozing, but toward morning I was awakened by footfalls near-by. I peaked out. It was a guard—at least he looked like one. I crept out of the bathing machine and dodged

around it conveniently until the man had passed. Then I went down on the beach, and later up to the convent or monastery on the hill. The sun was just creeping up over the horizon and there was a wonderful early morning hush over everything. I sat down and wrote some verses. Really, the impressionistic appeal was so overwhelming I could not help it. I've never had such a jolly night."

We breakfasted together, took one more short stroll and then separated again. Later, after seventeen days at sea, we learned that Symons had made London without further accident.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BLOOMSBURY GUARDS

ANOTHER circle of friends during my British Museum days, which I found entertaining, was the "Bloomsbury Guards," as they call themselves. This company of men, or "cla-ass," is apparently organized to stay on earth permanently in Bloomsbury. Some of the members die off now and then, but that does not matter. The generous museum flings wide its doors and out come new recruits.

The late George Gissing had considerable to report about the gentlemen in question in his book, "New Grub Street." I have purposely never read his account of them, because I have preferred to keep them in mind as I knew them myself.

Imagine a pretty threadbare, stoop-shouldered, but generally clean individual, anywhere between forty and sixty. Think of him as sitting at a desk in the great reading room, books piled up in front of him, pen and paper at hand, and a very longing, thirsty look tightly fitted to his face like a plaster, or, still better, like an "*Es ist erreicht*" mustache regulator to help one look like Kaiser Wilhelm. Whisper in his ear: "Let's be off to 'The Plough.'" Watch the set countenance relax.

If you will do these things you will get acquainted with one of the Bloomsbury Guards.

I made their acquaintance at the tavern opposite the museum. Political economy absolutely refused to interest me at times, and every now and then I would drop in at "The Plough," or "The Tavern." The exclusive saloon bar was the recreative room of the Guards in both cases. It took me some time to find out why the saloon bar was exclusive, but eventually a young barrister took me aside and explained.

"Don't be na-asty," he cautioned. "It's merely a matter of cla-ass, you know. Really, you must understand."

I feigned enlightenment instanter, and have always had a "cla-ass" feeling in London, from that day to this. I make no doubt that the cabby who frequents the public bar has a "cla-ass" feeling just as important.

The Guards that I knew best were "Mengy," "Q," and the "Swordsman," as I insisted on calling him on account of his special knowledge in pig-sticking. (He told me that he had spent two solid weeks on this subject in order to write an authoritative review for *The Times*.) These three men, "Mengy" in the middle as "Little Billie," would have taken the prize in a "Trilby" interpretation of side-street trios.

"Mengy" was a doctor of philosophy in general, and lecturer on mummies in particular. Germany gave him his start, and London his pause. Academically, he intended to be wise in Egyptology; humanely, simply one of the guards.

" Q "—good old " Q "—had a gentleman's instincts unsupported financially. He dreamed about music, wrote articles, reviews, and poems about it, hummed it and buzzed it, but " Q " was no musician. Like " Mengy," he had quite resigned himself *inwardly* to the post of a "Guard."

The " Swordsman " was a great, canny Scot. But he had cannied and caddied in the wrong way, pecuniarily. Fifty odd years of " sax-pence " had slipped by him, and he had nary a one to show. But what a mine of useless facts he had got together over in the Reading Room! What a peripatetic gossiper about trifles he had become!

When these three men got together, and a liquidating friend was along, the " Tavern " or " Plough," as the case might be, became the scene of as doughty passages at arms at the bar as Bloomsbury has ever known. As guards of their beverages they were matchless, while, as " Pub " hunters, it is to be questioned whether Bloomsbury, until the Guards came to earth, ever knew how many public houses she had. Perhaps " Q " was the most inveterate explorer. When " Q " got a pound or two for a review, he slicked up in his finest manner and went forth alone to seek and find. Somehow the " Plough " and the " Tavern " did not appeal to him when he was in funds. But he would give you his shirt if you happened upon him in some new "Pub " which he had located, and was trying to impress with his spirit. Then was " Q " indeed in his glory. His high hat never had such a luster as on such occasions.

"Why, my dear fellow," he would say, "how fortunate to meet you here! What is it to be?"

Perhaps you wanted 'bus fare to Hampstead.

"Most assuredly. Have something to warm you up for the ride."

The other Guards did not like "Q's" running off when he felt flush—"Mengy," in particular; but "Mengy" ought to be very grateful to "Q." When "Mengy" got permission to lecture on mummies at the museum and sent out learned circulars about his accomplishments as an Egyptologist, who was it, "Mengy," that made up your audience at your first lecture? None other than poor, old, wayward "Q." If he hadn't exercised compassion, you would have had no hearers at all.

He paid, too, "Mengy."

In a way, "Mengy" was a whining man. One day, there had been too much tavern and too little museum, and "Mengy" was under the weather. I shall never forget the picture he made, as he lounged back in his chair after the last drink. His two soiled long coats enveloped his slender form like blankets around a lamp-post, and there was a forlorn, half-academic, half-nauseated look in his pale face that can often be seen at sea. His disgruntledness made him melancholy. Standing up during a pause in the conversation, he gathered the skirts of his coats about him, readjusted his shabby hat, and sobbed, as if his heart had been torn out of him, "Nobody likes 'Mengy'—Nobody!" Then, with tears tracing the grimaces in his face, he

made for the museum to clean up his desk, and go home to his corpulent wife. She was the bread-winner in "Mengy's" outfit.

There is a story to the effect that "Q" at one time contemplated marriage and some one to look out for him. They say that he spruced up, and finally located a young lady of means. She was not unfriendly to his advances, and it looked like a match. But "Q" could not keep away from the comfortable quarters in the museum and the conferences at the "Tavern." The fair maid found this out, and went away to Edinburgh to think things over. One day, "Q" was in sore need of ten shillings. He could think of no one who would be so glad to let him have it as the fair one. He squandered sixpence on a telegram describing his distress. "If women but knew!" I have heard women sigh. Well, "Q's" girl knew. She wrote back by post: "Dear Q.—A shilling you will probably need for the evening; please find same enclosed. Yours, Janet." "Q" tells this story on himself to explain his continued singleness of purpose.

The Guards could not be referred to here without reference to "Bosky," although I never knew him as well as I did "Q" and "Mengy." "Bosky" probably had the greatest reputation of all as a learned man and writer. His writings on ancient men and things appear in our magazines at times. He once got me very much interested in what he knew about the art of burglary in Pharaoh's time, and I have often wondered why he did not write the article he had in mind. But, with

all his knowledge of dead nations and languages, " Bosky " enjoyed his " Tavern " sittings quite as much as did " Q " and " Mengy." The last time I saw him I asked him to write me something in Chaldaic. He handed me some hieroglyphics on an envelope. " Meaning? " I said. " Bosky " smiled benevolently, and said: " I want a long drink from the Far West."

He then told me how a sixpence had disturbed his sleep the night before. He had got home late, he said, after a " Tavern " sitting, but he was sure on going to bed that he had managed to save the sixpence for his morning meal.

" My wife's right artful," he explained, " so I tucked the coin under the rug. I had a dream that I'd forgotten where I had hidden it, and from three o'clock on I couldn't sleep. I knew where it was afterwards all right, but I was afraid my wife might dream that she knew, too. Married life has its troubles, I can tell you."

CHAPTER XIV

SOME LONDON ACQUAINTANCES

AS the years have gone by I have tried, whenever I have been in London, to look up the Guards that I knew during my first visit, as well as to make acquaintance with the new members. On one of my later visits a young English journalist accompanied me to the "Tavern." I told him what interesting times I had had there, and pointed out to him some of the men I knew.

"They're hacks, you know," he whispered. "Penny-a-liners. Gissing did them in 'New Grub Street.'" The young man liked neither his old companions nor the place, but he did not hesitate to borrow ten bob that he can hand back, if he wishes to, at his earliest convenience.

Call the Guards hacks, penny-a-liners or what you will; as a friend of mine once said about them, they know how to spell the word gentleman, anyhow, and that is more than many do who poke fun at them. They helped to make my first visit to London incomparably amusing at times, and for this I cannot help feeling grateful.

I have spoken of Arthur Symons' interest in my first efforts to describe tramp life. I think it was he and the magazine editors who abetted me in my scribblings, rather than the university and its doctrines of " Inquiral research," who are to blame for all tramp trips made by me in Europe. Of course, the inevitable *Wanderlust* was probably behind them to some extent, but all of them were undertaken with articles, and probably a book, as the ultimate object in view.

This can hardly be said of the earlier wanderings at home, and yet when eventually writing about them, they have interested me more than the tramps abroad. My vagabond days in foreign parts have received pretty much their just due in other books of mine and my wish here is more to explain what effect they had upon me as a student, and in leading on to other work here at home, than to *tell* what befell me on the highways. There are a few episodes and anecdotes, however, that were overlooked when making my reports from the field which may not be out of place now.

The most entertaining experience I had in Great Britain during the three weeks or so that I tramped there in 1893, concerns a well meaning professor in Edinburgh. My companion in this venture is now also a professor at one of our universities; at the time he was a fellow-student of mine in Berlin.

One of our " stops " in the itinerary planned by me was Edinburgh. We were to land at Leith from New Castle, anyhow, so why not see Edinburgh, whether we were real tramps or not?

A local professor, a friend of my family, a guest in my Berlin home at one time, was a man who believed greatly in religious things, and I guess tried to act according to his beliefs. He was noted also for his interest in the students. My friend and I thought it might be interesting to see how far the old gentleman's benevolence stretched when it came to giving charity to an American student in distress. A boyish curiosity, no doubt, but I have found in later life that such curiosity is worth while in a number of ways—when it comes to quizzing "public-spirited men," for instance, as to how far they will go into their pockets to finance investigations and prosecutions in municipal affairs.

With my friend the question was, "What story shall I tell?" I could not undertake the adventure because the professor would have recognized me. We rummaged over my basket of "ghost stories," and finally determined that the best thing was the truth with a slight change in names.

So while I waited in a coffee house near a railway station, my friend went up to the fashionable house in Queen Street with a tale of woe about being stranded in Scotland, and needing the price of a railway ticket to Glasgow that he might again get in touch with friends. Not much of a story, but quite enough for my companion—a man who had never before in his life been on tramp, and whose whole bearing was as near that of a non-sinning person as can be imagined.

He could not even use a strong expletive with a sincere ring. His face and general innocent air pieced

out this linguistic purity. He was just the man I thought to test the professor's charity. I had waited in the coffee house over half an hour when my tall friend loomed up in the distance. Pretty soon he held up five fingers, and I could see that he was chuckling. "Well, fivepence, anyhow," I thought. "He might not have done any better at home—the way he's dressed." In a minute he was upon me gasping "Five bob—five bob."

I asked him for details, and he told me how he had been met at the door by a "buttons," who ushered him into the professor's study, where the "ghost story" was told and listened to. "Finally," concluded my friend, "the old gentleman reached down into his jeans and handed me the five shillings, saying, 'Well, my good man, I sincerely trust that this money will not find its way into the next public house.'"

I laughed prodigiously. "The idea," I exclaimed, "of a medical man picking you out as a person likely to go near a public house."

The next day I did not laugh so much. My people in Berlin had written the good professor that my friend and I were on a trip in Scotland and might call on him. He divined that I was getting my mail at the general post office and wrote me this note:

"Dear Friend—Your friend called here yesterday and I did not realize who he was. Had I known I would not have been so hard on him. Come and see us."

How tramps in general leave Edinburgh on a hurry-

up call I cannot say, but after that note had been read two student tramps "hiked" out of that city double-quick. I took the Linlithgow road and my friend another—both, however, leading to the general post office in Glasgow, in front of which we agreed to meet thirty-six hours later. The five shillings were most punctiliously returned from this point, which also we left soon. The way that Edinburgh professor connected things was too Scotch for us.

CHAPTER XV

TWO TRAMPING EXPERIENCES

TWO experiences in Germany stand out very distinctly in my recollections of my tramp life there. The first occurred in Berlin, where, although I was officially still a student in the university, I had taken a vacation and secluded myself in the *Arbeiter Colonie,* on the outskirts of the city near Tegel, Humboldt's old home. There are two workingmen's colonies in Berlin, one in the city proper, the other at Tegel. I chose residence in the Tegel resort because the superintendent of the city colony was afraid that some of the colonists there might have recognized me during my various visits to the place, and would know me when I applied for admission as an out-of-work.

My purpose in becoming a colonist was to learn from personal observation what good the *Arbeiter Colonien* were accomplishing for bona fide out-of-works, and also as corrective institutions for vagrants. All told, there are not over fifty of these places in Germany. Their aim is to furnish temporary shelter to the worthy unemployed men who apply for admission and are willing to remain a month under the strict régime. The colonists work at such industries as the different colonies

take up, and receive about eighteen cents a day for their labor. Each colony keeps in close touch with the labor market, and tries to secure outside positions for the inmates as far as possible. In winter, of course, they are much more heavily patronized than in summer, but they are open the year round. I think they do good in so far as they winnow the willing from the unwilling, the genuine worker from the tramp. They also help an honest man over temporary difficulties, which, without the assistance of the colonies, might make him a vagabond. But I hardly think they are necessary in the United States, except possibly as places where the professionally unemployed could be made to support themselves.

My work in the Tegel colony was a strange one indeed for such a place—sewing together straw coverings for champagne bottles. For about eight hours out of the twenty-four I had to tread the machine, and divide the straw for the needle. I hope somebody got the benefit of the champagne we colonists were merely permitted to dream about.

The daily routine was about as follows: All hands up, and beds made at 5 : 30 in the morning, breakfast at six, prayers at half-past six, and work at seven. After two hours there was the inevitable second breakfast—one of the silliest time-consumers in German industrial life. At twelve there was dinner, at six supper, at eight prayers again, and by nine all lights had to be out.

One day, with two companions, I was sent on a unique errand—unique for me at least, in spite of all my

former varied activities and employments. We were ordered to wheel a hogshead of swill into Berlin—or perhaps it was grease. Whatever it was, it had to be delivered in the Chaussee-Strasse, and we were the chosen cart horses. The big barrel was put on a four-wheeled hand wagon, such as one sees so often in Berlin drawn by dogs—sometimes women—and away we started for town, my German companions teasing me (an American, so, of course, a millionaire!) about having to push a swill cart in Germany. I retaliated by doing just as little pushing as possible. I suppose it would have amused my friends in the city to have surprised me at this task, but fortunately our journey did not take us into their part of town. I have never had quite the same feeling of humility as that which possessed me during this experience. Indeed it preyed on my mind so that I soon arranged to have word sent to the colony that work awaited me outside, and that I should be released. I was given an honorable discharge as champagne protector and defender of that which makes soap.

The other occurrence deals with the German police. It is worth telling, if only to show how painfully stupid some of Germany's policemen can be.

Before starting out on the trip which brought me in contact with the police, I received from the late William Walter Phelps, our Minister to Germany at the time, a second passport, not wanting to take the other one away from the university. I expected to return to my lectures the next semester, and to take away my passport would later have involved re-matriculation, or other for-

malities worth while avoiding. Mr. Phelps very kindly entered into my plan, gave me another passport, and told me to let him know if I got into trouble at any time. A former tramp trip had taken me pretty well over North Germany, so I determined to explore the southern provinces on the second journey. I was out for six weeks, getting as far south as Strassburg. In Marburg, the old university town, where I learned that tramps could earn fifty *pfennigs* an hour, when the professors of physiology wanted to have human specimens for their illustrations, I had my tiff with the omnipotent police. With several other roadsters I went about nightfall to a *Herberge*, or lodging house, where supper and bed can be found at very reasonable prices. Soon after supper, while we were all sitting together chatting in the general dining and waiting room, a *Schutzmann* came in. His appearance did not in the least disconcert me, because I knew that my passport was in order, and had been through the pass-inspection ordeal on a number of previous occasions. In fact, I was a little forward in getting my pass into his hands, feeling proud of its menacing size. "That'll fetch him," I said to myself. "I wonder what will be made out of it this time." The pompous official took the sheet of paper, "star-gazed" at it fully three minutes by the clock, and then in a surprisingly mild voice said to me: "*Sie sind ein Oesterreicher, nicht wahr?*" (You are an Austrian, I take it.) I declared boldly enough that I was an American, as my pass proved. Some more "star-gazing" on the part of the policeman—then, as if he would explode unless he gave vent to his vulgar offi-

ciousness, and throwing the passport in my face, he bellowed: "American! American! Well, you go double-quick to your consul in Frankfort, and get a German pass. That big thing won't go," and away he stalked as if he were the whole German army bundled into one uniform. When he had left, the other *Kunden* gathered about me and told me not to mind the "old fool." But all that night I could not get over the feeling that the man had spat upon my flag. I suppose, however, that the poor ignoramus was simply ruffled because he had shown to the *Herberge* that he did not know the difference between an Austrian and an American pass, and did not mean any real insult.

CHAPTER XVI

SWITZERLAND AND ITALY

PERHAPS the pleasantest break in my university studies came in the summer of 1894, when I went to Switzerland, and, later in the year, to Italy. My writings had begun to bring me in a small income by this time, and I had learned how to make a dollar do valiant service when it came to paying traveling expenses.

My companion in Switzerland was a fellow-student at the university. I understand he is now spending his days and nights trying to write a new history of Rome. We did the usual things on our trip together, some things that were unusual, and we saw, on comparatively little money, the greater part of Switzerland. We also climbed a mountain; and thereby hangs a tale.

Both of us had been diligently reading Mark Twain's "A Tramp Abroad"—particularly the chapters on Switzerland. Eventually we got into the Rhone Valley, and at Visp, or rather at St. Nicholas, midway between Visp and Zermatt, we stumbled upon our ideal of a mountain guide, or, rather, on the ideal that the "Tramp Abroad" book had conjured up for us. We had seen other guides before, dozens of them, but there was some-

thing in the "altogether" about the St. Nicholas discovery that captured us completely. We drew the guide into conversation. Yes, he knew of a mountain at Zermatt that we could climb.

"Roped together?" said the present historian of Rome. Somehow, unless we could be attached to a rope and dangle over precipices, the ascent presented no great charms. Yes, we could even be roped together, could march in single file, spend hours in the snow, and have a wonderful *aussicht.*

"And the price?" A sudden return of everyday sense prompted me to ask. By this time our funds were getting pretty low, and neither one of us was sure when his next remittance would arrive. My friend's, by the way, never did arrive when we most needed it.

The guide told us the prices for the Matterhorn and the other "horns" in and about Zermatt.

"Three hundred francs to go up the Matterhorn!" the historian gasped. "Why, we haven't over a hundred in the outfit."

"Ah, but the Breithorn!" the guide went on, readjusting his coil of rope and ax, as if he knew that it was these very things that were tempting us and leading us into bankruptcy. Never before or since have ropes and axes possessed such fascinating qualities as they did that day. The guide told us that the Breithorn was ours for thirty francs—*"Sehr billig, sehr billig,"* he added. The historian and I took stock of our resources. We finally concluded that, if the hotel bill at Zermatt didn't exhaust our means, we could just barely hire the guide, climb

Zermatt without interference. As we paid the guide off before going into the village, I asked him whether he would not like to have us write a recommendation for him in his book. He smiled. "Oh, I can go up that hill backwards," he said, "but I am much obliged." This is the way he left us: bankrupt practically, wet, tired, and with the humiliating inference that had we been real sportsmen we could have climbed the "Breithorn" heels foremost. I have never read "A Tramp Abroad" since that experience.

Of our impoverished condition on reaching Breig there is little to say except that it was whole-hearted and genuine. We could hardly have had over two francs between us. The hotel man insisted that we were honest, however, and would pay him when we could. So for ten days we settled down upon him to wonder why we had ever attempted the "Breithorn." There was a stone wall, or abutment, near the town, about sixty feet high. Climbing it was like going up a New England stone fence to the same height—there was not a particle of difference. If one lost his footing, there was nothing to do but fall to the bottom and think things over. A fall from near the top, which nearly happened to me, could only have stopped all things, because there was nothing but bowlders to light on.

For two hours, every day of our stay in Brieg, we fools risked our limbs and necks in finding new ways to climb the wall. Perhaps the Matterhorn presents more difficult problems in climbing to solve than those of our wall, but I doubt it. At any rate, I should want to

be paid, and not *pay,* three hundred francs before I would attempt either wall or mountain to-day.

The journey into Italy was made alone. One bright afternoon in October, I left Poschiavo, in the Italian Engadine, where I had spent several weeks in calm retreat, writing, studying Italian, and climbing mountains, by eyesight, and made off for Venice. I had, perhaps, sixty dollars in my pocket, a sum quite sufficient, in those days, to have emboldened me to tackle Africa, had it seemed the next thing to do. Italy was nearest to hand just then, and I wanted to experiment with my Italian on the Venetians. Learning German had given me a healthy appetite for other languages, and I had dreams of becoming a polyglot in course of time. I also had a notion that I could learn to write better in a warm climate. Berlin seemed to warp my vocabulary when I felt moved to write, and I persuaded myself that words would come more readily in a sunny clime.

A genuine seizure of *Wanderlust* was probably the predominant motive in the southern venture, but I was determined that it should be attended with good resolutions. Indeed, at this time, I was so far master of *Die Ferne* that, although temptations to wander were numerous enough, I was able to beat them off unless the wandering promised something useful in return, either in study or money-making.

Besides the intention to scribble and learn the language, I furthermore contemplated a course of study with Lombroso at Turin. My collateral reading at the University of Berlin had got me deeply interested in

criminology, and Lombroso's writings, of course, had been included. From the very beginning I disagreed with his main thesis, and I do yet, as far as professional crime is concerned. However, I thought it would be valuable to come in contact with such a man, and I expected to learn much from his experimental apparatus. This plan fell through in the end. I found there was quite enough criminology for my purposes in watching the Italian people in the open, and I invented some apparatus of my own for experimentation, which, under the circumstances, probably revealed as much to me as would have that of Lombroso. Nevertheless, I regret now that I did not make the professor's acquaintance, for, say what one will, of the men that I know about he has done the most in recent times to awaken at least scientific interest in crime as a social disorder.

My first ride down the Grand Canal in Venice, from the railway station to the Riva, was my initial introduction to the Venetian wonderland. As a boy, I had read my " Arabian Nights " and had had, I suppose, dreams of Oriental things, but on no occasion that I can recall had anything Eastern ever taken hold of me sufficiently to inveigle me into a trip outside of my own country. That was wonderful enough for me then, and it becomes more wonderful to me every day that I grow older.

But that first ride in Venice! As the gondola bore me down the canal to the Riva where my lodgings had been secured in advance, it seemed to me as if I were gliding into a new world, a world, indeed, that hardly belonged

to our world at all. The mere strangeness of things did not impress me so much as their soft and gentle outlines. I thought then of the city, as I do still, more as a lovely, breathing creature, truly as a bride of the Adriatic, than as a dwelling place of man. I walked from my lodgings to the Piazza. As I turned into the Piazzetta, and the glory of that wonderful square flashed upon me in the glow of the bright afternoon sun, I came suddenly to a halt. Such moments mean different things to different men. I remember now what passed through my mind, as if it were yesterday:

"If to come to this entrancing spot, young man, is your payment for pulling out of the slough that you once let yourself into, then your reward is indeed sweet."

For four most enjoyable months I lingered near that fascinating Piazza reluctant to leave it. Lord Curzon thinks that the Rhigistan in Samarcand, considering all things, is the most beautiful square in the world. Perhaps, had I seen the Rhigistan first, and at the time I saw the Piazza, I might have been similarly impressed. As it happened, when, in 1897, I first beheld the Rhigistan I thought inevitably of the Piazza, and then and there renewed my allegiance to her superior charm over me.

Of my life in and about this square there is much that I would like to tell if I could tell it to my satisfaction, for I believe that Venice is a mistress to whom all admirers, without distinction of color, race or previous incarnation, should offer some artistic tribute either in prose or verse.

My most intimate friend, while in Venice, was Horatio Brown, a gentleman who knows the city probably better than any other foreigner, and much more intimately than many of the Venetians themselves. His book, "Life on the Lagoons," is the best book about the town that I know, and I have rummaged through a number. Mr. Howell's "Venetian Life," like everything he writes, is very artistic and instructive, but I was never able to find the Venice that he knows.

I must thank Arthur Symons for persuading Brown to be kind to me, and I fancy that he told him the truth —that I was a young *Wanderlust* victim. The result was that, although I had to live pretty scrimpingly, Brown's home on the Zattere became a magnificent retreat, where, at least once a week, I could brush up my manners a little, and enjoy an Anglo-Saxon atmosphere and undisguised comfort.

I think it was Monday evenings that Brown generally received his friends. There were many interesting persons to meet on these occasions, literary and otherwise, but a good illustration of the vagaries of fancy and memory is the fact that an Austrian admiral stands out strongest in my recollections of the Monday evenings that I recall. I suppose it was because he had been through a great many adventures out of my line, and was not quite my height. Any one smaller than I am who has projected his personality into more alluring wanderings than I have becomes immediately to me a person to look up to. Tall men and their achievements, fiendish or angelic, are so out of my range of vision that I have

never tried to wonder much about them. Napoleon I could have listened to by the month without a murmur; Bismarck would have made me look dreamily at the ceiling at times.

The admiral told me how Garibaldi once gave him a scare, when the Italians were freeing themselves of Austrian rule. It seems that Garibaldi kept the enemy guessing at sea quite as much as on shore, and the admiral received word, one day, that Garibaldi was coming up the coast toward Venice with a formidable force. As a matter of fact, he was doing nothing of the kind, being busy in very different quarters. "But how was I to know?" the admiral said to me. "He was jumping about from place to place like a frog, and I had no reason to believe that the rumor might not be true. I decided to take no chances, and commandeered two Austrian-Lloyd steamers and sunk them in the Malamocco Strait. I felt able to guard the other end of the Lido. But Garibaldi fooled me, as he did a great many others, and the two steamers were sunk for nothing."

During a part of my stay in and about Venice, I lived alone in an empty house at San Nicoletto on the Lido. Within a stone's throw was the military prison, dreaming about which, in the empty house, after a luxurious gratuitous dinner, sometimes made night life rather gloomy. I got my non-gratuitous meals at an *osteria* near-by. I wonder whether the asthmatic little steamer that used to run from the Riva to San Nicoletto is still afloat? It was owned and captained by a *conte,* who also collected the fares. I patronized his craft for a while, and

then in partnership with a *corporale,* stationed at the San Nicoletto marine signal station, invested in a canoe.

The adventures that we had with this canoe were many and varied. On one occasion, for instance, the canoe and I were suspected of being spies, and came very near being bombarded. I had spent the afternoon in Venice, leaving the canoe near the Giardino Pubblico. It was darker than usual when I was ready to return to the Lido, and I carried no light; but I set out for home undaunted. I had been paddling along serenely enough for fifteen minutes or so, when, on nearing the powder magazine island, or whatever it is between Venice and San Nicoletto that is guarded by a sentry, I was partly awakened from my dreaming by a strenuous "*Chi va la?*" on my left. I say partly awakened advisedly, because I paid no attention to the challenge, and paddled on. It seemed impossible that anybody could want to learn who I was out there on the water. Again the words rang out, clear and sharp, and again I failed to heed them. The third time the challenge was accompanied by an ominous click of a gun. I came out of my dream like a shot. Why I should be challenged was absolutely unintelligible to me, but that suggestive click jogged my work-a-day senses back into action.

"*Amico! Amico!*" I yelled.

"Well, draw up here to the landing and let me look at you."

I put about and paddled over to the island, where the sentry detained me nearly half an hour, making me explain how harmless and innocent I was. I must needs

tell him who my landlord was on the Lido, which room I occupied in the empty house, why in the name of Maria I lived on the Lido at all, and by what *maladetto* right I dared cruise in those waters without lights. He finally let me pass on, with the warning that my craft stood a good chance of being sent to the bottom if she passed that way again at night without the proper illumination.

One day this canoe foundered near the Giardino Pubblico, and the accident brought to light a typical Italian trait in the *corporale.* I thought that it was an exhibition of simple stubbornness at the time, but Brown assured me later that I was mistaken. I was trying to manage things when the canoe put her nose into the mud bank, and the *corporale* was in the garden, I think, looking on. He was slicked up in his best uniform and looked very fine, but, as a sailor and part owner of the canoe, I thought he should come to her aid in such a case of signal distress. At first he also thought that he ought to bestir himself in the matter, and carefully looked about to see if anybody was watching. Then he picked his way more like a woman with fine lace skirts on than like a man, let alone a sailor, to a dry spot within perhaps thirty feet of the canoe. There he spent himself utterly in telling me how to do what he could do a hundred times better from the shore. All the canoe needed was a good, big shove, which he could have given her without any great inconvenience. I urged him in spotless Italian to get a real genuine move on and send me seaward.

"*Ma non—ma non,*" he kept on whining, pointing

to his highly polished shoes and the mud—with which there was no need for him to come in contact. At this juncture Brown and his gondolier hove in sight, and I gave them the shipwreck signal. While they were coming to my rescue, the *corporale,* again, like a mincing woman, got back into the garden. The gondolier threw me a rope, and then towed me out of my predicament, the *corporale* watching the maneuvers, catlike, from his vantage ground above. I waved him adieu, and would not speak to him all of the next day. Brown explained his conduct with the one word—*critica.* If there is anything that Italians dislike, he told me, it is to be surprised by their neighbors in predicaments that make them appear ludicrous. He said that the *corporale* would have let the canoe rot in her mud berth before he would have subjected himself to the scrutiny of the onlookers in an attempt to save her. The reason he retired to the garden so quickly when Brown appeared was because he saw *critica* coming his way.

I am afraid that a similar fright possessed him several weeks later, when the canoe was blown through the Nicoletto Strait and out into the billowy Adriatic, whence she never returned. I was not present when the accident occurred, but " they " say that the *corporale* was, and that all that was necessary to save the canoe was to swim a short distance from shore and tow her back. But the " public " was doubtless looking on, and the *corporale* was afraid of the critical comments and suggestions.

I had the most fun with the canoe, while she lasted, in the small, narrow canals in Venice proper. Day after

day, I cruised with her in different parts of the city, exploring new routes and sections, lunching where the hour overtook me, and in the evening paddled back to port on the Lido, feeling very nautical and picturesque. The principal fun came when I had to turn corners in the small canals. The gondoliers have regular calls, "To the right," and "To the left," and by rights I should have used them, too. But, somehow, all I could think of when surprised at a turn by an oncoming craft was to cry "Wa-hoo!" at the top of my voice, and then hug the side of some buildings till the danger had passed. The way the gondoliers scolded me was enough to have frightened a prizefighter, but I learned to expect scoldings and not to mind them. On the Riva, where I was wont to forgather with many of them, they finally got to calling me "Wa-hoo."

Of one of the Riva gondoliers I made quite an intimate, and when I moved back to Venice from the Lido we were almost daily together, either on the water or in his *sandalo,* or swapping yarns over a glass of wine and *Polenta* in some *osteria.*

On one occasion he came to me and said: "*Signor,* will you not accompany me on a journey to the fine lace and glass houses in Venice?"

I said: "Gladly."

He continued: "You will see many fine things in our lace houses and our glass houses."

I said: "Let us see these wonderful things."

So we proceeded up the Grand Canal; afterwards we went down the Grand Canal. Since Lord Byron's time

I believe there is a slight difference of opinion as to which is up or down in this canal. We got into Sambo's *sandalo,* and Sambo took me to one of the great lace houses, where I had to expose all my ignorance of lace, and yet try to appear to be a specialist in this commodity; then, to a place where what I understand is called Venetian glass was sold; then to other places. During none of our calls did I make a purchase, much to the disgust of the attending clerks, but fully within the agreement with Sambo that I should not buy that which I did not want or did not have money enough to buy. I noticed that Sambo received either a brass check or a small amount in Italian currency on each call. Eventually this pilgrimage to places of Venetian commercialism was finished. I said to Sambo: "What in the world is the meaning of all this?"

He said: "Why, *signor,* did you not observe? We have been friendly together, have we not?"

I said: "Certainly, Sambo, but it strikes me as funny that you should take me to places where you know I have no idea of buying anything."

"Ah, *signor,* you do not understand the situation here in Venice. You see, these glass people, these lace people—and other people—give us gondoliers a commission. When we get so many brass checks, we go over and cash them in, and get a certain percentage for such business as we may have brought to the business houses. When we get money, of course that comes in the shape of tips such as you have seen, and we put that direct in our pockets.

"I want to say to you, *signor,* that although my story may offend you, and you may think I had no right to take you on the ride, which, as you will remember, I suggested should be on me, I have succeeded in accumulating nine *lire.* Signor, please do not take offense. I knew the game. Will you not come as my guest to-night at one of our gondolier's restaurants, where I will spend every one of those nine *lire* on a good dinner?"

I suppose that Sambo is still inviting other innocent people like myself to pilgrimages to the lace and glass houses of Venice.

Of Rome, which I visited after my experiences in Venice, there is also much that I should like to say literarily, if I felt that I could do it. Most writers dwell heavily on the ancient sadness of Rome. There was nothing in the ancient sadness of Rome, during the month that I spent in that city, in the spring of 1895, which compared with the sadness which came over me on going to the English cemetery and reading the names of certain great men known to all the world, and of certain young men known personally to me, Englishmen and Americans, who are buried in that picturesque but unwaveringly sad spot.

A friend of mine, who has since settled down and gone in for all the intricacies of what settling down means, was with me in Rome, on a certain night in 1895, when there was a discussion of what was the best thing for two students at a German university to do. It was decided that, first of all, Gambrinus, in the Corso, was the best place for considering things. I remember that

my friend lost his umbrella. As it came time to leave the Gambrinus, he became very indignant over the disappearance of this umbrella, which he thought should be in his hands at any time that he wanted it. The umbrella was not to be found. The supposition was that one of the waiters had taken it. How could this be proved? We called our waiter and said to him: "Where is that umbrella?"

He replied: "*Signor,* I have no idea."

My friend said: "Well, suppose you get an idea just about as quickly as you know how."

The waiter said that he would do as suggested. He went to the proprietor's wife, and came back pretty soon and said that there was no record of any missing umbrella.

My friend, who was completely occupied with the determination that he was going to get that umbrella, got up, and, in his very abrupt way, said: "You bring me my 'bamberillo.' If you don't, there will be trouble."

On account of fear that there might be some other instruments used than those which would ordinarily go after this pronouncement of my friend, I suggested that we proceed up a certain stairway and ask the proprietor's wife whether she did not think that my friend should get his "bamberillo" back. She replied, with such pathos as a German woman is capable of: "I fear you do not understand the Italian mind. This Italian mind is strange and peculiar."

"Yes," my friend said in German, "it is so strange that I cannot find my 'bamberillo.'"

The good *Hausfrau* said: "Well, you must excuse us down in this country of—*Ja, Sie kennen das Vieh, nicht wahr?*"

From Rome I went to Naples. My money gave out in this town with pronounced persistency. I received there fifty dollars a month to meet all bills—promissory notes and other financial engagements. My home during my residence in the city was a room which I shared unwillingly with two of the most marvelous cats that I have ever known. Some men say they like cats. It would please me to have any one of these men sentenced to ten days' imprisonment in my room in the Santa Lucia in Naples. The song called "Santa Lucia" is often heard in our streets. It is a pleasant song for those who have never had to live in the Santa Lucia with cats as I did. I honestly tried to increase my Italian vocabulary with the Neapolitan variations while in Naples. But I could never find any word, vituperative or otherwise, that would explain what those cats that prowled around in that strange room in the Santa Lucia meant to me. I make so much of them because they made so much of me during my fifty-dollar-a-month existence in Italy. I found it difficult to live within my bounds. My fifty dollars a month were generally all torn to pieces by the twentieth of the month, and not always on account of nonsense. At this time I was much engaged in buying books that interested me, and I think it fair to say that a good quarter of my monthly stipend went for their purchase.

On the twentieth, particularly in Naples, I was very

ragged with my fifty dollars. I had a proprietor there in this catful Santa Lucia who was a North Italian. My fifty dollars did not reach me as quickly as I wanted it and I got worried. My rent was due. It was a problem how I was to make this plain to the landlord. In the end I went to him and said in all frankness: " I should like to say to you, signor, that I am very much disappointed that my money has not come. It will come. It must come. There seems to be some delay."

Again there was that fine Italian touch. He said: " My son, do not be worried. I understand your difficulty. *Mio figlio,*" and he patted me on the back, " you will be taken care of." Is there anything in the English language that can beat that?

While I was stopping in the Santa Lucia I took my meals, such as I could get, in a restaurant one or two doors away. In this restaurant were all kinds of truckmen, cabmen and men in general who have to spend much of their time in the open air. I had learned in Venice that there was a strong bond of sympathy among Italian criminals.

It occurred to me that while I was among some of these people, it would be worth while to learn something about the Maffia Society and the Camorra. I had heard indirectly that these societies were working pretty well in their own interests at home.

How many Italians there are in the United States I do not know. It is questionable whether any one else knows exactly. We certainly know that there are several millions of them. My interest in inquiring in Naples,

so far as I was able, into the workings of the Maffia and the Camorra, was to find out, if I could, what power they were alleged to have over their own countrymen.

In pursuance of these facts, I ran up against a *facchino*. A *facchino* is a common porter in Italy.

I said to one of my *facchino* friends: "Can you not make me acquainted with some friend in the Maffia Society?"

He was a genuine lounger, a stevedore, a longshoreman—and a big man.

He said to me, in effect: "Are you not wise enough to go into that park, where you can meet anybody, and find out all you want to know about the Maffia or the Camorra?"

I said: "Yes, I suppose I am. But what will it cost?"

"Why, you just go over there. Perhaps you will find somebody of the stripe you want; perhaps you won't."

I made no discoveries that were of any value. But what is to be said about my friend, the *facchino,* and the Maffia and the Camorra? I look at it this way. If these people have quarrels which so concern themselves, then let them proceed on their own lines. If they have quarrels in my country, and think that by any chance their secret societies can rule my country, they have terribly mistaken their calling. They are not so dangerous as the newspapers make them out to be. They believe, true enough, in their end of the game, to a finish, which can sometimes be disturbing.

I asked my *facchino* friend what he thought in general of the people who might be called Maffia or Camorra in the park which he suggested.

"Well, he said, "I no more know what the Maffia or the Camorra will do, than I know what will happen to me in the next five minutes."

"Then I must make my own conclusions," was my reply.

CHAPTER XVII

A VISIT TO TOLSTOY

IN midsummer of 1896 I learned to know Tolstoy. It was at the time of the National Exhibition at Nijni-Novgorod. Cheap excursion tickets on the railroads and river boats were to be had throughout the summer, while correspondents for foreign newspapers were given first-class passes for three months in every rod of railroad trackage in the country. It was an opportunity for exercising *Wanderlust* in style such as had never before come my way. Baedeker's little book on the Russian language was bought, introductions to friends in St. Petersburg were secured, and away I went to spend preliminarily a week or so as a field-hand, or in any other capacity that I was equal to, on Tolstoy's farm, at Yasnaya Polyana, an estate about one hundred and fifty miles south of Moscow. At that time I was not sure about the railroad pass. In St. Petersburg, friends kindly put me in the way of getting it, and on I went to Moscow, and, before the summer was over, to hundreds of other towns and villages in different parts of the Empire. On two hundred and fifty Russian words, or thereabouts, my passport, free railroad transportation, and perhaps $75, I traveled, before I got back to Ber-

lin, about twenty-five thousand miles. I kept my hotel expenses down by living on trains. First-class railroad accommodations include a bed. So when night came I calmly took my berth in a train bound in any direction long enough to secure me a good rest. In the morning I got out and looked about me, or rode on as I liked. This proceeding also saved me passport dues at hotels, an item of considerable expense in Russia if one does much traveling. My meals were found at the stations, which provide the best railroad restaurant service found anywhere. With all the saving, sight-seeing and riding, however, my vacation over, I was heartily glad to return to Germany, and for months afterwards my *Wanderlust* was delightfully under control.

By all odds the most interesting national feature that Russia allowed me to see was Count Tolstoy. The Tsar, the museums, the palaces, the large estates, the great unworked *Ninghik*—these men and things were entertaining, but they did not take my fancy as did the novelist and would-be philanthropist. And yet I had never read any of Tolstoy's novels before meeting him, and my notions of his altruism were vague, indeed—about what the ideas are of people who have never been in Russia or seen Tolstoy, and who, on learning that you have been there and met him ask immediately: "Say, *on the level,* is he a fakir or not?"

Once and for all, so far as my simple intercourse with him is concerned, it may be most boldly declared that he never was a fakir—no more of one when he was sampling all the vices he could hear of, than he is now in

urging others not to follow his examples as an explorer of Vicedom. It is strange, but when a man, who has sampled everything that he could, in the way of deviltry, and then quits such sampling, says that he has enough, and attempts to steer others on a better tack than he took, there is a prodigious amount of doubt in thousands of minds as to whether the man sampled enough cussedness to know what the real article is, or whether others should fight shy of what he saw or not.

The man at Yasnaya Polyana in 1896 was a fairly well preserved old gentleman, with a white beard, sunken gray eyes, overhanging bushy eyebrows, a slight stoop in the shoulders, which were carrying, I think, pretty close to seventy years of age. He wore the simple peasant clothes about which there has been so much nonsensical talk. Every man who lives in the country in Russia, puts on, when summer comes, garments very similar in cut and shape to those worn by the Ninghik. The main difference during the warm months between the Ninghik's outfit and that of his employer's is that the latter's is clean and the Ninghik's isn't.

My purpose in going to Yasnaya Polyana was mainly journalistic, I fear. The entire trip in Russia, indeed, was to find " available " copy for the New York newspaper referred to. The free railroad transportation allowed me to cover " news " stories on very short notice, and also made it easy to get material for " space " articles. Or, rather, on first getting it, I thought that the pass would work wonders along these lines. In other hands it would very possibly have done so, but the

" available " matter finally delivered by me proved only moderately successful. Putting aside all questions of ability, reputation and connections, it has been my experience that European " stuff " is not in such demand in the United States that the average writer can make it support him even on a vegetarian diet. Our editors, as a rule, want American " stuff." Only in very recent years have they given much attention even to the foreign news service, leaving the gathering, sifting, and distribution of the day's facts to newsmongers who have often been as unscrupulous as they were incapable.

Americans flock to Europe in thousands, going feverishly from place to place as if their very lives depended on seeing such trifles as the old snuff-boxes of ancient celebrities. Nothing must escape them. They want their money's worth at every turn. A few tarry longer than the rest and try to acquire some knowledge of the present condition of the countries and people they see. But the vast majority push on hurriedly, elbowing their way into nooks and crannies of alleged historical interest, until Europe becomes for many of them, probably most of them, a mere museum of things " starred " or not " starred " as the guidebook man saw fit to make them. The life of the people, their contemporaries, is looked into only incidentally; " anteeks " are what the mob is after and look for. This indifference to present-day Europe, its politics, social customs and institutions, has in the past been largely to blame for the inefficiency of our foreign news service. What was the use of going to heavy expense to inform Americans about things

abroad which they would pay no attention to when they were abroad themselves? The publishers and editors reasoned that there was no use, and even at this late day many of them prefer a news item from Yankton, Dakota, to one from London. Their readers may know very little more about Yankton than about London, but that does not matter. Perhaps they have relatives in Dakota, or formerly loaned money to farmers out there at three per cent. a month. That settles the matter for the newsmongers. The Yankton dispatch is given prominence, although it refers to nothing of more importance than a divorce. Its provinciality is of greater cash value to the newspaper than the cosmopolitan significance of the message from London. This, and more that might be said, has made a foreign correspondent's life in Europe unattractive, to say the least. At one time, however, I seriously considered preparing myself for such a career. The trip to Russia was meant as a trying-out of my qualifications. It seemed to me then, and, if our newspapers, or, rather the newspaper readers, would take more interest in other things than massacres, notable suicides and fashionable scandals, it would seem to me now, that such a calling ought to be useful as well as profitable. Until our people care more, however, for a well-considered article from London or Berlin than they do for a hasty " wire " from Wilkesbarre concerning the mobbing of an Italian, the usefulness and commercial value of the foreign correspondent's efforts do not appear very evident. At any rate, the time came when I decided that my foreign " stuff " was not of the bread-winning

kind, and I threw overboard the dream of becoming a writer on such lines. To this hour, however, I regret that some good opening in the foreign service did not show up at the time the dream was so present.

But to return to Tolstoy and Yasnaya Polyana. All told, I was in and about this place for ten days, seeing Tolstoy and his family practically every day; even when I did not stop in the house overnight I divided my time between Yasnaya Polyana and the home of a neighbor of the Tolstoys. When staying at Yasnaya Polyana I slept in what was called the Count's library, but it was evidently a bedroom as well. At the neighbor's home I had a cot in the barn where two young Russians, friends of the Count, also slept. They were helping Tolstoy "re-edit" the Four Gospels, omitting in their edition such verses as Tolstoy found confusing or non-essential. The life on the old estate at Yasnaya Polyana has been described so often by both English and American visitors, that there is very little that I can add to the known description of the grounds and daily routine. The place looks neglected and unkempt in many respects, but the two remaining wings of the old mansion are roomy and comfortable. Eight children of the original sixteen were living at the time of my visit, ranging in years from fourteen to thirty and over. The Countess was the "boss" of the establishment in and out of the house. What she said of a morning constituted the law for the day, so far as work was concerned. She had assistants, and I think a superintendent, to help her, but she was the final authority in matters of management. The

Count did not appear to take any active part in the direction of affairs. He spent his time writing, riding, walking and visiting with the guests, of whom there were a goodly number. At one time he may have worked in the fields with the peasants, but in July of 1896 he did not share any of their toil—at least I personally did not see him at work among them. His second daughter, Maria Lvovna, however, the one child that in those days was trying to put her father's theories to a practical test, was a field worker of no mean importance, certainly to the peasants, if not to her mother. Trained as a nurse she was also the neighborhood physician, having a little pharmacy in the straggling, dirty village outside the lodge gates. It was through her kindness that I was permitted to join the peasants in the hayfield, and to get acquainted with them in their dingy cabins. Although it was pleasanter to gather with the other children on the tennis court, the haying experience was at any rate healthy and, to some extent, instructive. I noticed, however, that my presence caused considerable merriment among the peasants. They had grown accustomed to Maria Lvovna, indeed she had grown up among them, whereas I was a stranger of whom they knew nothing beyond the little that Maria had told them. Some of them no doubt thought it very foolish of me to prefer haying to tennis and refreshments, while others probably doubted the sincerity of my purpose—viz.: to get acquainted with their conditions and to see what effect Maria Lvovna's would-be altruism was having upon them. I might as well state immediately that at

no time did I succeed in finding out satisfactorily what this effect was, if it existed at all. That she was a very welcome companion in the fields and cabins there could be no doubt, but was this due to the peasant's correct interpretation of her intentions or to her commercial value to them as a voluntary, wageless helper? Maria herself thought that some of the peasants understood her position as well as her father's teachings. Not being able to converse with the peasants privately I cannot say whether she was deceived or not.

Some years previous she had also tried to conduct a village school independent of the priest's, but she was finally forced to give it up on account of clerical opposition. As neighborhood physician and nurse, however, she had ample opportunity to teach the peasants what she believed, and to reason with them about following the dictates of their own consciences rather than the behests of the clergy and the orders of the military. At the time of my visit I think she had made most headway among the men, unwilling taxpayers in Russia at all times. To be told that the priests and military should support themselves without assistance from the peasantry was sweet music indeed. "Think how much more money we can have for vodka!" many an Ivan must have whispered when Maria was exhorting them not to be soldiers, and to refuse their financial support of the church.

In one cabin we visited together Maria noticed several colored portraits of the Imperial family hanging on the wall. They were set in metal frames.

"How comes it," Maria exclaimed, "that I see so many emperors this morning?"

The big, burly peasant looked sheepishly at her, and then, mumbling that his wife was to blame, swept the pictures into his hands and threw them into a cupboard.

"The woman likes such things," the man explained. "I put them away, but she gets them out again."

Maria thought that the peasant was sincere in his renunciation of Tsar worship, and perhaps he was. I think, however, that, like many of the other peasants on the estate, he found it financially profitable rather than spiritually consoling to have Maria think him one of her converts.

Only two days before our call at this cabin, for instance, he had stolen some wood from the Countess. I believe that it was a log "which he thought the Countess would not need." The superintendent had discovered the theft, and the peasant had been, or was to be, reported.

"But, Maria," he said, when begging Maria to intercede for him with her mother, "tell the Countess how much more I could have taken. Just a log like that—that is no crime, is it?" Maria told him that she would do what she could, and we left the man happy, Maria's promise of intercession seeming to be as good to him as the forgiveness of the Countess. Nothing was said about the return of the log.

In this, as in many other cases, Maria was doubtless exploited by the cunning peasants—the Ninghik can be uncommonly cunning in small things—but she said in

reply to my suspicion in this regard: " Even so. Who could expect such people to be upright in everything? Besides the man confessed his offense. He is a good fellow in his way. Seldom beats his wife and does not drink overmuch. I believe in building all that one can on such good qualities as he shows, and if I intercede for him it may increase my influence for good in his family."

" It may also confirm him in his pilfering habits," I interposed. " He will learn to expect friendly interference on your part on such occasions."

" Perhaps so, but I prefer to think not," and that ended Maria's argument in the matter, as it did in many other talks I had with her, the Count and those neighbors who could be called his " disciples."

Their principles and religious beliefs were never given prominence in general conversation unless they were directly asked about them. They chose by preference to live them as best they could, rather than polemicize about them. Only on two or three occasions did Maria, for instance, advance any of the ideas about how the world was to be made better, and then only because I had quizzed her point-blank. Day after day she went her quiet way, haying, nursing, doctoring, and when she could spare the time, enjoying herself on the tennis court.

Her older sister, Totyana, was by no means so active in her acceptation of her father's teachings. Indeed, in 1896 she was still very undecided about them. She told me, one day, laughingly, that for the present she was only half won over; " perhaps when I am as old as my

father I shall be wholly won over." In her way she seemed quite as happy as Maria; all of the children, in fact, saw life on its brighter side, even to one of the older boys, who was a soldier, and put much store on multi-colored uniforms and ornamented cigarette cases. What the Countess really thought about the whole business I never found out. We had one short conversation about the Count and his work, during which she delivered herself of these remarks: "You will hear many things here that I do not agree with—I believe it is better to be and do than to preach." I judged from these sentiments that Tolstoyism as a cult had not captured her. That she thought much of the Count as a man and husband was evident from her solicitous care of him.

The Count himself, although very approachable, was so busy with one thing and another during my stay, that only on two occasions did we have anything like a satisfactory conversation. And these two opportunities could be only partially improved by me because I honestly did not know what to talk about with the old gentleman—or rather there was so much that I wanted to ask him, but did not know how to formulate in the way that I fancied such a great man would expect questions to be put, that the time went by and I had done but little more than observe the man's manners, and listen to what he volunteered to say without being questioned. We spoke in English and German, as it happened to suit.

Now, that I look back over the experience and recall the old gentleman's willingness to talk on any subject,

I regret exceedingly that I did not quiz him about literary contemporaries and affairs. The principal thing he said along these lines that comes to mind now concerned poetry and how it impressed him. We were sitting in the music room, and some one had said something about the relative values of prose and poetry as methods of expression. Tolstoy preferred prose.

"Poetry," he said, pointing to the parquet floor, "reminds me of a man trying to walk zigzag across the room on those squares. It twists and turns in all directions before it can arrive anywhere. Prose, on the other hand, is direct; it goes straight at the mark."

Talking about America and Americans, one afternoon, he was much interested in William Dean Howells, Henry George and the late Henry Demarest Lloyd. He told me that there were four men in the world that he was very anxious to bring together; he believed that a conference between them would throw much light on the world's needs. Two of the men, if my memory is correct, were Mr. Howells and Mr. Lloyd.

Only one strictly theological, or rather religious bit of conversation occurs to me now. We were walking in the fields, the Count having spent the day at his friend's house where the Four Gospels were being overhauled. The talk wandered along in a rather loose fashion until we came to the subject of miracles—we also tackled parables before we got through.

I had become a little mixed in understanding the Count, and said something like this: "And the miracles you consider so illuminating?"

" No, no, no," he returned, " anything but illuminating; they are befogging. It is the parables that I find so clear and instructive. The miracles will have to go, but the parables we could not possibly spare."

On no occasion did the Count ask me what I believed. The matter seemed to make very little difference to him, or, at any rate, if I believed anything and was made happy thereby, he did not see the use in taking it up in conversation.

In the dining room, one noon, he said to me: " I see that you like tobacco." There was no critical or reproachful accent in the remark; he merely noted what was a fact.

" I used to be fond of it," he went on, looking down at the floor, " and I used a *good deal* of it. I finally thought that it was doing me harm and let it go." Other things that had been " let go," liquor and meat, for instance, had apparently been given up on the same simple ground—they were injurious to his health. Religion, self-denial for self-denial's sake, " setting a good example," etc., these matters did not appear to have influenced him. At any rate, he did not speak of them when talking about his renunciations, and, in the case of tobacco, frankly said that if he were young again, " no doubt it would be pleasant to use it again." In a word, his vegetarianism and self-service, so far as anything that he said to me is concerned, were due as much to hygienic notions as to religious scruples. And yet I was told by a very trustworthy person that the old gentleman regrets very much that the simple life, as he sees it, cannot pre-

vail throughout his home. At table, for instance, he would prefer that all hands should help one another, and that the Countess' white-gloved servants be dispensed with. In his personal life he seemed to be trying to be his own servant as much as possible.

CHAPTER XVIII

SOME ANECDOTES OF TOLSTOY

A GOOD illustration of Tolstoy's irresponsibility on the estate, or what he meant to be such, is the way he invited me to stop one night at his house. I had gone swimming with the boys to a pool perhaps a quarter of a mile from the house, and it was getting to be time for me to know whether I was to sleep at the Tolstoy's or in the neighbor's barn. While we were drying and dressing ourselves, I heard a voice in the brushwood near-by saying: " Meester Fleent, my wife invites you to spend the night with us." It was the Count himself, who had come all that distance to tell me that his *wife* had *told him* that *he* was to seek *me* out, and deliver *her* invitation, not *his*. I shall always remember his face as it appeared through the twigs, and the errand-boy accent in his voice and manner. I have never before seen greatness in such a humble posture. It was openly said to me by one of the Count's friends that this humility has given the old gentleman considerable trouble, in its acquirement as well as in its exercise. Probably we shall know much more about all this when the Count's Journal is published. I learned this much on the spot: Tolstoy feels very keenly the seeming inconsistency of his life, the

fact that he cannot make his altruistic notions harmonize with his daily life. His chagrin has, on one or two occasions, nearly made a coward of him. At night, when no one was looking, he has slunk away toward Moscow, like a tramp, to be himself somewhere. But always, before he has got far, a voice has said to him: "Lyoff Nicolayevitch, you are afraid. You dread the remarks of the crowd. You shrink on hearing that you preach what you don't practice. You are trying to run away from it all, to be comfortable yourself whether others are or not.

"Think of your wife and children, of the home you have made. Is it your right to sneak away from all this just to make yourself look and sound consistent? Have you not duties toward your wife and children to observe? Do you think you can throw over all that you were to them and they to you merely to satisfy your vanity—vanity, Lyoff, and nothing more. You are vain in your very sneaking. You insist upon appearing all that you think you are.

"Back, back, back! Remember your wife and children. Remember that you have no right to make them think and live the way you would. Remember that to sneak away is cowardly. Back, Lyoff Nicolayevitch!" And back the old man has trudged, to take up his burden as a citizen.

One night he talked with me about my tramps. He asked me why I had made them, how the vagabonds lived, and why I had not continued to live among them. I told him the truth. He stroked his white beard and looked dreamily at the chess-board.

" If I were younger," he said at last, " I should like to make a tramp trip with you here in Russia. Years ago I used to wander about among them a good deal. Now, I am too old—too old," and he ran his hands rheumatically up and down his legs.

When leaving Yasnaya Polyana, I asked the Count's neighbor in whose house I had slept whether there was anything I could do for him or the Count during my travels. My railroad pass was good yet for a number of weeks, and it occurred to me that, perhaps, during my wanderings I could run some errand for Tolstoy. At the time, I had no thought that my proposition could get him, myself or anybody else into trouble. To be sure, Mr. Breckenridge, the American Minister at St. Petersburg, had given me, in addition to my passport, a general letter " To whom it may concern," recommending me to everybody as a bona fide American citizen and gentleman, and bespeaking for me in advance the friendly offices of all with whom I might be thrown. But I failed utterly to see how I was going back on this letter in offering to render a service that the Count, or rather his neighbor, asked me to render.

When it came time to go, the neighbor handed me a large sealed envelope, containing letters, which I was to deliver, if possible, into the hands of one Prince Chilkoff, a nephew I believe of the then Minister of Railways, who was temporarily banished to a rural community in the Baltic Provinces, about two hundred miles from St. Petersburg. I knew nothing about the Prince, or what he had done to offend the powers that be. What the

letters contained, was, of course, a private matter into which I knew enough not to inquire. There was a promise in the undertaking which attracted me, and I willingly accepted the commission. Arriving in St. Petersburg I called on Mr. Breckenridge and happened to mention the errand that I was on. I told him that Chilkoff was banished in the sense that he had to live within given boundaries, but that I hardly thought he had done anything very serious, adding that his uncle was one of the Ministers of State. All that I know to-day about young Chilkoff's offense was that he was alleged to have been mixed up too intimately for his own good with the Donkhobors and other more or less tabooed religious sects in the Caucasus.

At first Mr. Breckenridge did not see anything out of the way in my errand, and very kindly offered to assist me officially in seeing the Prince, *i.e.*, he suggested that we openly ask for governmental permission to proceed to the Prince's home. Then I mentioned the secret package of letters. The Minister's manner changed. "Suppose you dine with me to-night," he said, "and we will discuss those letters." I did so, and the upshot of the meeting was that the package of letters was ordered back to Yasnaya Polyana. At the time it seemed a pretty humiliating trip to be sent on, but I am glad now that I did not shirk it. "I have recommended you as a gentleman to the Russian government and people," said the Minister, "both in the letter I gave you to the Minister of Finance when you were getting the correspondent's pass and in the later one of a general character. For

you to undertake secret missions of this character may very easily make the government wonder whether I knew what constitutes a gentleman when I gave you those letters."

I have had to eat a number of different kinds of humble pie in my day, and tramp life let me into some of the inner recesses of humiliation that no one but a tramp ever knows about; but no journey has ever made me feel quite so cheap and small as that return trip from St. Petersburg to Tula, the railway station where visitors to Yasnaya Polyana leave the train. I telegraphed ahead advising the Count's neighbor of my coming, and expected that he would meet me at the station. What was my surprise, on arriving at Tula, to find the old Count himself waiting for me.

"Ah! Meester Fleent," he exclaimed as I got off the train and greeted him, "have you brought me news from Prince Chilkoff?"

I wished at the time that I could sink out of sight under the platform, so pathetically eager was the Count's expectancy. There were only a few moments to spare, and I clumsily blurted out the truth, trying at the same time to explain how sorry I was. The Count calmly opened the envelope and glanced at the letters.

"Oh, it wouldn't have mattered," he said, and after shaking hands, went back to his house. He neither seemed vexed nor embarrassed. A suggestion of a tired look came into his face—he had ridden seventeen versts—that was all.

One of his "disciples," referring to this affair and my

connection with it, some weeks later, ventured the statement that I had "funked" in the matter. I hardly think the Count felt this way about it, whatever else he may have thought. At the time, however, as he rode away on his horse, the letters tucked carelessly under his blouse, I would have given a good deal to know exactly what was in his mind. I remember very accurately what was in mine—a resolution, that, whatever else I did or did not do in life, I would never accept an official letter to the effect that I was a gentleman and then proceed to do something which was likely to get the letter-writer into trouble. "Either leave such letters alone," I counseled myself, "and be your own interpreter of gentlemanliness, or know, before accepting them, what will be expected of you."

Tolstoy, no doubt, has long since forgotten this episode, but I never will. In a way it left a bad taste in my mouth, and I felt that I had spoiled my experience at Yasnaya Polyana. I outgrew this feeling, however, and often think now of my visit to the Count and his family as I did when I drove away to Tula in the two-wheeled cart. I likened myself at the time to a dog "caught with the goods on," so to speak, and slinking away with his tail between his legs, but with the "goods" held tight in his mouth. Something, I know not what, unless it was the sweet peace and kindliness of the Count and his surroundings, seemed such forbidden fruit for me of my tempestuous career to taste of, that I felt very much as I used to feel as a boy when caught trespassing in other people's orchards. It did not seem right that one who

had been through what I had should be allowed to enter into such an atmosphere of good cheer. Nevertheless, I was glad that entrance had not been denied me, and made many solemn resolutions to profit by the experience. Whether the resolutions have been kept with the fervor and determination that animated me in 1896, I would rather not say. But one remembrance is as vivid and dear to me to-day as when I rode away in the cart: the Count and his desire to do the right thing. "If to be like him," I have often caught myself saying, "makes one a fakir, then let us all be fakirs as quickly as possible." Unpractical, yes, in some things; a visionary, perhaps; a "literary" reformer, also perhaps. But my simple testimony about him and his is that I have yet to spend ten days in a gentler and sweeter neighborhood than those I enjoyed in and about Yasnaya Polyana.

CHAPTER XIX

I MEET GENERAL KUROPATKIN

IT is a far cry from Count Tolstoy and Yasnaya Polyana to General Kuropatkin and Central Asia, but while dealing with men and things Russian I might as well tell here as elsewhere of my visit to Central Asia in the fall of 1897. Again the motive was journalistic, and again I was the proud holder of a pass over all the Russian State Railways, not over the private lines, however, as the year before. I have to thank Prince Chilkoff, the Minister of Railways, for this second pass. He had become considerably interested in my travels, and on learning that I contemplated excursions into remote parts of Russia he kindly offered to ask the Tsar to grant me free transportation for three months "in order that my investigations might be facilitated." When the transportation finally reached me, it read: "With Imperial Permission." I have always thought that there was an undue amount of red-tape in getting the pass, but Prince Chilkoff personally assured me that he must formally ask the Tsar for it before it could be issued. This being true, the poor Tsar has more to attend to, particularly in these later days, than ought to

fall to the lot of one man. Truly, he is an overworked man, if he must give attention to such minor details. No wonder if some anarchist pots him. There is not a railroad manager in the United States that could do all that the Tsar is alleged to have his hand in on the railroads, and at the same time run a great nation, a national church, and the largest army in the world. Consequently the Imperial permission did not make the impression upon me that it would have, had I believed that the Tsar had done anything more than nod his head, or make a scratch of the pen, when Prince Chilkoff asked for the pass.

I had seen the Tsar the year before, just after his coronation in Moscow. The occasion was the Imperial return to St. Petersburg, following the terrible accident on the Chodyuka Field in Moscow where thousands of men, women and children were crushed to death in the mad scramble for the coronation mugs. Rumor darkly hinted at the time that the scramble was a forced affair, that certain officials charged with furnishing the crowd with mugs and refreshments, had made a deal with the purveyors of these things whereby a much smaller supply than was necessary should be furnished, the surplus money paid out for an adequate supply going to the crooked officials and dealers—that the scramble, in a word, was a preconcerted scheme to cover up their devilish machinations. Charges of graft and corruption are so numerous and haphazard in Russia that one can seldom find out the truth. Whether this particular deal was actual or not, however, the look on the Tsar's face

when he rode down the Neffsky Prospect on his return from Moscow was dismal enough to make almost any rumor credible. I had a window on the Prospect directly opposite the Duma (City Hall), where the Tsar and Tsarina accept bread and salt from the city fathers on such occasions. A good shot could have picked off the Tsar at that moment with ease.

A more tired-out, disgusted, bilious-looking monarch than was Nicholas during that Neffsky ride I have never seen. The ceremony at the Duma over, he and his wife were whisked away toward the Winter Palace, bowing languidly to the right and left. "Insignificant" was the word I heard from those about me at my window, and it sums up the man's looks, and I am afraid his importance as well.

In 1897, the local Tsar of Russian Central Asia was General Kuropatkin, the soldier who seems at the present writing to have buried his reputation as a commander-in-chief in Manchuria. At the time in question he was looked upon as one of the ablest and most popular generals in the Russian army. He was also supreme "boss" in the district under his command. When the visit of the party of which I was a member was about over, and we were to leave Central Asia, two or three enthusiastic Britons thought that it would be worth while to wire our gratitude to the Tsar. Kuropatkin was asked about the advisability of such a proceeding. I was not present when the question was put to him, but one who was present told me that Kuropatkin replied: "What's the

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use? I represent the Tsar here and will transmit your message to him." The telegram was sent nevertheless, via the British Embassy, and, as usual, in such cases, we eventually learned that the Tsar had, metaphorically speaking, spent his entire time wondering how he could make our visit in his dominions more entrancing.

The excursion was the first of the kind ever permitted in Russia's Central Asia possessions. It was really a commercial undertaking on the part of a tourists' agency in London, but because it was unique in Central Asian history and also on account of Kuropatkin's hospitality, it received a significance, social as well as political, which does not ordinarily accompany such enterprises. The tourist agency had gathered together thirty-odd Britons at the last moment, two lone Americans, a Southern lady from South Carolina, who, when reaching Samarcand and learning that she was almost directly opposite Charleston, South Carolina (on the other side of the world), cheerfully said: "How dear!"—and myself. The British Foreign Office was asked to appeal to the Russian Foreign Office to let us into the forbidden country—forbidden in the sense that one required a special passport from the Russian War Office before he was allowed to cross the Caspian. At least this was the story told in those days, and Englishmen were eager to believe it because the Russians had pushed their southern frontier so affectionately toward Afghanistan and India. It seemed to be their idea that the Russians were afraid to let them see what they (the Russians) were doing on their side of the Afghanistan fence. The Russian War

Office communicated with Kuropatkin at Askabad, asking him whether he was afraid to let the Britons see how the Russian side was getting on. Kuropatkin replied: "Let them come in."

I joined the party at Tiflis, crossing the Black Sea from Sebastopol to Batum. On the steamer were two of the Britons. One evening we were all sitting in the smoking room. The Britons spoke their English with all its accents, and some of it I could not help listening to, trying nevertheless not to mind that they spoke it after the "We own the World" fashion. One of the Britons made up his mind that I was a Russian spy. On several occasions he looked at me as if I had no right on any ship that carried him. He also made blasphemous remarks about me to his friend. I learned later that he represented *The Standard* of London. He wrote several letters to his paper about the trip, and, on one occasion, even tried to send a dispatch concerning an interview the newspaper correspondents had with Kuropatkin at Askabad. I have been told since that only a few of his articles ever reached their destination. I have seldom met a man so submerged in the world of suspicion.

Kuropatkin received us at Askabad, the administrative Russian town. How he looked and acted during the Russian-Japanese War I do not know, but he looked the *foxy* soldier in every detail at Askabad. I say *foxy* advisedly. He had a detective's eyes, the reserve of a detective's chief, and the physique of a man who could stand much more punishment than his uniform would

give him room for. Since the Japanese War it has been said that he is a thief—or a grafter, if that be more euphemistic. Certain persons claim that he is five million rubles winner as a result of the war. What certain persons say in Russia, and, I am sorry to say, out of it, also, so far as many of the dispatches to American newspapers is concerned, is really nothing but gossip. Fortunately, the Russians know what gossip is, and merely let it drip. Unfortunately for readers of American newspapers certain correspondents do not make the slightest effort to distinguish between gossip and facts.

Our party spent seventeen days all told in Kuropatkin's bailiwick, or Trans-Caspia as it is officially called. We lived in a special train, stopping at the different places of interest for a few hours, or overnight, as circumstances required. The train was in "command" of a colonel. The diplomatic side of the journey was attended to by a representative of the Foreign Office, attached to Kuropatkin's staff.

Trans-Caspia is no longer the *terra incognito* that it was forty to fifty years ago, thanks to numerous travelers and writers, among them our countryman, the war correspondent, MacGahan. It consequently does not behoove me, a mere skimmer, to attempt here much more than the statement that our party traveled from Krasnovodsk to Samarcand and back, and saw such places as Geok-tepe, Merv, Bokhara and the River Oxus. Geok-tepe in 1897 consisted principally of the fragments left by Skobeleff and Kuropatkin after their

forces had slaughtered some twenty-odd thousand Turcomans—men, women and children. The siege of the fort lasted a full month, although the Turcomans had anticipated forms of defense. Before the Russian campaign against them was over Skobeleff had to begin the present Trans-Caspian Railroad in order to keep in touch with his base of supplies. Kuropatkin was his chief of staff. They went to war with the natives with the notion that one everlasting thrashing was imperative to teach the Turcomans to knuckle under. The slaughter at Geok-tepe proved very instructive, the Turcomans of to-day being a foolish people—docile, at least, so long as the Russians can continue to impress them. Skobeleff is long since dead, and Kuropatkin, the other "butcher," as he has been called, is under a cloud.

I had various glimpses and talks with this soldier, perhaps the most interesting glimpse taking place at Askabad during an outdoor religious service on St. George's Day. The men in our party had to appear at this service in dress suits early in the morning. The service was accompanied by the usual Greek orthodox paraphernalia and was interesting to those who had never before been present on such occasion. What interested me was the short, stocky general, standing bareheaded on a carpet near the officiating priests. For one solid hour he stood at "Attention," not a muscle in his body moving that I could see. I made up my mind then (and I have never changed it) that he was endowed with stick-at-iveness to a remarkable degree—a fact bolstered up by his persistency in the Manchurian retreats.

I MEET GENERAL KUROPATKIN

The most interesting interview I had with Kuropatkin was, one morning, when the three correspondents, including myself, were summoned to Government House at Askabad and given an official reception. Kuropatkin sat behind a large desk covered with pamphlets and official papers. We correspondents were given three chairs in front of the desk. The interpreter (Kuropatkin spoke neither English nor German) stood at our left.

"And I want you to know," Kuropatkin went on, after informing us somewhat about the Russian occupation of Trans-Caspia, "that our intentions here are eminently pacific. We have land enough. Our desire is to improve the holdings we now possess. You can go all over Russian Central Asia unarmed." I thought of Geok-tepe. No doubt Kuropatkin believed that that butchery had cowed the natives for all time.

"Our desire here is economic peace and prosperity."

This was the upshot of his words, translated for us by the interpreter. Was he telling the truth or not? There was not a correspondent present who could have answered this question.

My impression was that the man was trying to give us an official version of the alleged truth, and that he was proud of what he had been able to accomplish as an administrative officer, after demonstrating his ability as a human butcher. I have often since thought that, if the Philippines are to be attended to quickly *a la Russe*, Kuropatkin could do the job very neatly.

As a mere man shorn of his grand titles, I liked him and didn't like him.

I asked him if he remembered MacGahan, the American correspondent. He looked at me sharply, always more or less as if he were still listening to that St. George's Day sermon, and said: "It pleases me to hear that name mentioned. I knew him well."

I asked the interpreter to ask him if he couldn't think of an anecdote or two about MacGahan that I could send to my paper. I realized that there was a sorry task ahead of me writing about far-off Trans-Caspia—truly *terra incognito* to most Americans—unless America could be dragged into the story somehow. But Kuropatkin was not in the anecdotal mood. "When MacGahan and I were together," he said, "there were too many other things to think about and remember."

This is the upshot of my intercourse with Kuropatkin. Had there not been something about the man and his surroundings that took hold of my imagination this slim report would not have been made here. Throughout my journey in Trans-Caspia I thought of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. At Merv we were told that there, once upon a time, Genghis had slaughtered one million people. At Samarcand, we were shown Tamerlane's tomb. As a modern representative of might and force Kuropatkin seemed to be an improved edition of Genghis and Tamerlane. Whatever else he was, or was not doing, he was plainly trying to experiment with civilization before resorting to the sword. His schools, railroads and agricultural experiments were all indicative of his constructive ability. For this side of his character I liked him.

I disliked his career in butchering, and I was not pleased with his hard face. Nevertheless, there was something so companionable and soldier-like in his parting "Bonne Chance," when we bade him good-by, that, for me, there was more in him to like than to scold about. As regards the alleged five million rubles he is supposed to have "grafted" in Manchuria, I can merely say that he did not look like a thief to me.

CHAPTER XX

IN ST. PETERSBURG

A POLICE raid that I attended in St. Petersburg, although not directly connected with any tramp experience there, has remained memorable, and, after all, was due to my interest in tramp lodging houses. I explored the local vagabonds' resorts pretty carefully during my investigations, visiting among others the notorious Dom Viazewsky, the worst slum of the kind I have ever seen anywhere. On a winter's night in 1896 (the conditions have not changed, I am told), 10,400 men, women and children slept in five two-story buildings enclosed in a space about the size of a baseball diamond. Only a hundred paces away is the Anitchkoff Palace. The inmates of the Dom Viazewsky are the scum of the city's population, diseased, criminal and defiant.

On one occasion, a woman belonging to the Salvation Army was met in the dead of night by a police sergeant and some patrolmen, as she was leaving the most dilapidated of the buildings. She had been doing missionary work.

"My God!" the sergeant exclaimed, seeing her unattended. "You in here alone?"

"Oh, no, not alone, officer," the intrepid little woman replied. "God is with me."

"Huh," the officer grunted. "I wouldn't come in here alone with God for a big sum."

The raid which I attended was made on a smaller lodging house, not far from the Alexander Nevsky monastery. In a way, it was got up for my benefit, I fear, and I was later very sorry about it all. The then chief of detectives was a pleasant old gentleman, called Scheremaityfbsky. I told him that it would interest me to see how his men "worked," and he introduced me to a stalwart chap—I forget his name—who kindly offered to show me how a suspicious place was raided.

We all foregathered first at the precinct station house nearest the place of the raid, at about nine o'clock in the evening. A Scotch friend accompanied me. Here were the so-called detectives, or policemen, in citizens' clothes. A squad of uniformed patrolmen had already been sent on ahead to surround the lodging house and prevent any departures. Pretty soon we followed after them in single file, and I could hear passers-by on the sidewalk whisper, "Polizie! Polizie!" The way they used the word and stopped to stare at us might have given a stranger the impression that we were on a portentous mission, which might involve the arrest of the entire city. Arriving at the lodging house, the gates were closed behind us, and we assembled in a lower corridor, where all hands received candles. The patrolmen outside forbade both entrance and escape.

Clumsily, the tallow from the candles dripping on our

hands, we climbed the dingy stairway to the men's quarters. A dismal lamp burned in the center of the room, throwing a weird light over the awakened lodgers. What a medley of humanity that vile-smelling room contained! Old men barely able to climb out of their bunks; rough middle-aged ruffians, cowed for the moment, but plainly full of vindictiveness and crime; youngsters just beginning the city life and quaking with fear at the unannounced visitation—never before have I seen human bodies and rags so miserably entangled.

The method of the raid was simple enough. Each inmate was made to show his passport. If it was in order, well and good; he could go to sleep again. But if his papers were irregular, or, still worse, if he hadn't any at all, below he went to join the others who were guarded by the policemen. The worst that was found that night I fancy were some hiding peasants, who had run away from their villages and were loafing around begging in the city. One poor old man took me for an officer. I was passing around between the beds, holding my candle high so that I could see the faces of the lodgers. The old man—he must have been eighty—held out a greasy scrap of paper, doubtless his passport, and tried to tell me how little he had done in the world that was wrong. There was an appealing look in his faded, ancient eyes, like that in those of a mongrel who would fain beg your mercy. I was glad to learn that his papers were all right.

Later, the women's ward was also inspected. Here

was practically the same bundle of human flesh and rags. Like the men, the women had to identify themselves or go to the station house. One young peasant girl lost her head, or perhaps she could not read. She handed the detective her pass confidently enough, but when he asked her her name she gave a different one from that on the passport.

"Go below, you little ignoramus," ordered the officer, and below she went, obviously wondering why all names were not alike—at least when it came to identification.

The inspection over, we returned to the room below to count the "catch." Over a score had been drawn into the net. They were lined up outside between two rows of policemen, the candles were put out, and the inspector gave the order to march. The weird, gloomy picture they made in the dark, as they trudged forward in their rags, is one that I do not care to see again. It seemed to me then, and it seems to me now, that the scene told the sad, sad truth about Russia.

"A nation on tramp," I murmured, as my friend and I went on alone down the Nevsky.

An actual arrest is perhaps the most exciting adventure I have to relate about my tramp experience in Russia. By rights the arrest should never have taken place, but what do rights count for in Russia? It came about in this fashion.

General Kleigels, at that time (1897) prefect of St. Petersburg, had given me a general letter to the police of that city, reading about like this: "The bearer of this is Josiah Flynt, an American citizen. He is here,

in St. Petersburg, studying local conditions. Under no circumstances is he to be arrested for vagabondish conduct." The word " vagabondish " was the nearest English equivalent my friends could find for the Russian word used; it was underscored by the general himself. I was told by an American resident in Russia that with such a letter in my possession I could almost commit murder with impunity, but I succeeded in getting arrested for a much less grave offense.

The actual tramping in the city was over, and I was back in my own quarters again, cleaned up and respectable. One night, three of us, an Englishman, myself and another American, started out to see the city on conventional lines. My tramp experience had not revealed much to me about the local night life, and I boldly took advantage of the opportunity offered by the American's invitation to see the town as he knew it. In the end, there was not much to see that I had not looked at time and again in other cities, but before the end came there was a little adventure that proved very amusing. During our stroll together the Englishman, a diminutive little chap who had just bought a new pot hat and wanted everybody to know it, got separated from us. We looked high and low up and down the street where we had missed him, but he could not be found. We were about to go to the police station and give an alarm, when, as we were passing a rather dark stairway, who should come shooting down it but the Briton, his hat all battered in and his face bleeding.

" Look at my new Lincoln and Bennett, will you? "

he snarled, on reaching the street. "Sixteen bob gone to the devil!"

We asked him what the row had been about. He didn't know. He merely remembered that he had gone up the stairs and had been politely received at the door. "I went into the parlor," he said, "called for drinks, and sat down. After a while I thought it would be fun to open my umbrella and hold it over my head. I guess the light must have dazzled me. The next thing, I was shooting down those stairs. They're bally quick here with their bouncer, ain't they!"

The American was strong in Russian, and also stood well with the police in his district, and he was determined that the proprietor of the establishment should give an account of himself. While he and the Englishman went up the stairs I remained below in the street, according to agreement, and called at the top of my voice for a *gvardovoi* (policeman). Two *dvorniks* (gatekeepers, but also police underlings) came running up, and most obsequiously begged the *gospodeen* to tell them what was the matter. Forgetting their police power, I pushed one of them aside, declaring that I wanted a patrolman and not a house porter. General Kleigels, himself, could not have taken umbrage at my indiscretion any more hot-headedly. The *dvorniks* reached for me instantly, but I ran up the steps to get under the sheltering wing of the American. The *dvorniks* followed me, and there was a long, heated discussion, but in the end I had to go to the police station, where I absolutely refused to say a single word. The officer searched me,

finding in one of my coat pockets the little Englishman's card. He rubbed it on my nose, saying: "*Vasch? Vasch?*" (Yours? Yours?) but I held my tongue and temper. The man never looked into my hip pockets. In one of them I had a well-filled cardcase, and in the other might have carried a revolver.

He did not seem to know that hip pockets existed. Pretty soon my companions joined me, and a long parley ensued between my fellow-countryman and the officer. Finally my valuables were returned to me, and I was paroled in my friend's custody until I could produce General Kleigels' letter. I did this that same day, about three o'clock. It was plain to read in the officer's face that the document gave him pause. It was probably the first of the kind that he had ever handled, or that General Kleigels had ever issued. But he had insulted me, and knew it, and he apparently reasoned that making any great ado over me or my letter would not help matters if I intended to make him trouble. So, after he had noted down the date and number of the letter, he handed it back to me and pronounced me free to go where I pleased. I shook hands with him, for some strange reason, and I shall never forget the queer way he looked at me and the manner he had of doubling two fingers in his palm when taking mine. If this was meant as a secret sign or signal, it was lost on me.

The wind-up of this little affair with the police was more amusing than the arrest. Not long afterwards, in company with the American Minister and a Scotch friend, I went on a fishing and camping trip to Northern

Finland. While we were in camp I received word that I was wanted on a criminal charge in St. Petersburg, but that there was "no need to worry about it." I proceeded leisurely with our party up to the Arctic Circle, and then back to St. Petersburg, when I immediately made inquiry of my house porter about the summons or indictment. The porter laughed. "It was nothing, sir, nothing," he assured me. "One week came the indictment, and the next week the announcement of your acquittal. It was a very simple matter."

I was sure that both proceedings could refer to nothing more serious than the fracas with the *dvorniks* on the night of my arrest, and I determined to learn what had happened to my two friends, if anything. The American I found at his *datscha* on one of the islands.

"Did you receive an announcement of your indictment on a criminal charge?" I asked him.

"Yes," he said; "my crime was whistling in a police station."

It seems that the officer in charge, anxious to have his revenge on one of us, selected the resident American, because he thought it best not to press any charge against me and he was unable to locate the little Englishman. The American had whistled unwittingly, and entirely by way of exclamation. I recalled the incident. On the fateful night, while he was pleading with the officer for my release, the latter made several astounding statements, and at one of them my friend could not repress a slight whistle of amazement. I asked him how he came out with the case.

"Loser," he said. "I put the matter in the hands of a lawyer, and he mussed things so that I was fined twenty-five rubles. How did you make out?"

I told him of my acquittal. "There's Russia for you," he declared. "You are at heart the technical villain and go free. I, the poor Samaritan, am fined. That's just about as much rhyme and reason as they show in this country in everything they do."

"And the little Englishman," I asked, "the one who really caused the entire trouble—where is he?"

"The last I heard of him he was out on one of the Pacific Islands, having a fine time."

In such ways were spent some of my student days in Europe. That I learned about Europe and its people during these unconventional experiences as I never could have learned about them had I spent all of my time in libraries and the lecture room, seems to me undeniably true. Some of my wanderings were, in all truth, a submission on my part to the all-demanding passion for wandering. Yet, as they came along in connection with my university studies, which kept my mind seriously inclined, I think they did me more good than harm. I learned to know England, Germany and Russia during these trips. It was also a good thing for me to be let loose every now and then into the jungle of Europe's vagabond districts and then vent such lingering *Wanderlust* as my temperament retained.

Political economy as a more immediate field of exploration was at times neglected. Professors Schmoller and Wagner were not listened to as attentively as they

deserved to be. The German university idea of serious work was frequently disregarded. Perhaps it is furthermore fair to say that in continuing, as at times I did, my vagabondish explorations in Europe, I was assisting in perpetuating roving habits. I can now solemnly declare here that the real roaming habits of former days, roaming habits in the sense that I was willing at any time when *Die Ferne* called, to put on my hat and chase after her—received a complete chill during the European vagabond life. That it will pay one who desires to know Europe in the underground way, to make tramp trips such as I did, and to get acquainted before they leave home, with those millions of emigrants who come to us from Europe, I firmly believe. Neglected though my political economy was on many a journey, forgotten though were many of the books, I am not sure that I did not read my Europe, if not my political economy and other bookish things, better than I could have done it in written form.

Naturally during my tramp trips and experiences in Europe I made use of them for purposes of newspaper correspondence, magazine articles and incidentally for the preparation of such a comprehensive book as I thought I could write on tramp life in general. In this way these wanderings may again be called useful, because they helped to increase my powers of observation from a writer's point of view, and to give a serious purpose to such investigations on my part. I have no reason to regret any tramp trip made in Europe, but I am glad now that they are over and done with.

Such training in writing as the reporter gets on his newspaper, I got on returning to my home in Berlin, and having my " copy " most rigidly cut to pieces by my mother.

Of course this was not newspaper training in the sense that I had to report, and to a city editor. But it was all the training I ever had in writing that amounted to anything, until in after years I was interested enough in the business to observe for myself, in such examples of good writing as came to my hand, how, as Robert Louis Stevenson indicates in one of his books, language may be made to fit most tightly around the subject matter in hand.

CHAPTER XXI

I RETURN TO AMERICA

IN the early spring of 1898 I made up my mind once and for all that it was high time for me to leave Europe and get back to my own country if I ever intended to get to work with young men in my profession, or in any other activity in which I might be able to hold my own.

Europe had not palled on me—far from it! To have lingered on in Berlin, in Rome or in Venice would have pleased me at that time, had I possessed the necessary means to linger, wander and observe. Had I had financial independence and no sense of responsibility, I might have been in Europe to-day as a resident.

In 1898 our country went to war with Spain. How the rumors of war affected other young Americans studying, traveling, or on business in Europe at that time, I do not know. In me the rumors of war created an uncontrollable desire to return to my native land. Perhaps I thought I could go to war in her defense. It is impossible for me now to analyze, as I should like to do, my determination in 1898 to get away from Europe, university studies and all that the life abroad had meant to me, just as quickly as possible. My mother was

aghast at this resolution on my part. She said to me: "If you were going to China, Kamtchatka, Tibet or almost any other place but America, I could easily think it a very natural thing to do. But America! I feel as if I should lose all touch with you."

I suppose that my mother was fearful that on returning to America I would also return to all the unpleasantness, devilishness and lawlessness which I had pretty successfully run away from when I shipped as a coal-passer in Hoboken in 1889, on the poor old steamship *Elbe*. Furthermore, I think it not unlikely that my mother herself had lived so long in Europe, and had been able to keep such close track of me there, that she had a notion that we were always to live in Europe, and that there I must somehow win or lose. Then, again, there is no doubt that it disappointed my mother very much that I would not continue in the university and take my degree.

But something impelled me on my course, and in the spring of 1898 I said good-by to the university, to Berlin, to Germany and to all Europe as places in which I desired to cast my lot.

As a mere visitor, I have been back in Europe on several occasions since 1898, but I have never regretted my stubborn decision in that year to return to my country and make it my abiding place.

In retrospect, it occurs to me, first of all, that the general experience in Europe, on account of its prolongation, lost for me that personal touch with young men of my own age who were making their way ahead in

America, and which accounts for so much in getting into the swim of things, making those friends that avail so much in business or in the professions—in a word, in growing in your own community with your own people. I stayed too long in Europe for my own good.

In 1898, in spite of the mysterious and uncontrollable desire to get back to America, I was for months after my arrival in New York the most Europe-homesick person imaginable. Whom did I find that knew me? Only a few friends settled there who had been at my mother's home in Berlin, or that I had met during my travels. I did not know one of them in any business capacity here, and not one of them had been acquainted with me in any of my American homes. I had got acquainted with them in Europe, "on the march," so to speak.

I think it unfortunate that a boy or young man should linger so long in lands far removed from his own, when, in the end, he usually must try to amount to something.

It is again that question of camping, which I referred to in an earlier part of my story, which is preëminently noticeable in all such American colony life abroad as I have observed. The colonies are for the most part nothing but camps, the colonists being only too obviously mere birds of passage.

I do not believe it is a good thing for a young man, whose life is afterwards to be taken up again in his native land, to spend so much time out of it as I did. I lost touch with my home generation; I spent the most formative years of my life in countries where, as it proved, I was not to live and make my way; I got into

lackadaisical ways of looking at things, and I fell to thinking that living in bachelor quarters on five hundred dollars a year would be an enviable achievement.

Yet Europe, and particularly Germany, also did me a certain good for which I must always be grateful. I have already hinted at some of the benefits which I think I appreciated at the time of their bestowal, and have learned never to forget. I must certainly thank Europe for a quieting effect on my fiery unwillingness to see inexorable truths as they must be seen sooner or later. I must also thank Europe for some most delightful friends and acquaintances. But where are they now? The great majority are scattered no doubt all over the world, only a few remaining in my own country for me to enjoy. This is the pathos of the whole business as I have been through it.

CHAPTER XXII

NEW YORK AGAIN

TAKING up life anew in New York City, after many years abroad, is not an easy game. In my case it was particularly disagreeable, because for a while I had a homesick feeling for Europe, and I suppose for my particular house in Berlin. I shall never forget the uncomfortable feeling I had while my ship was docking as to the outcome of myself and my affairs in this new country—my country, it is true, but to me a country which I knew very little about from the beginner's point of view. That I was a beginner, psychologically and financially, is pretty plain from what I have before said.

I had one consolation. It was a letter from L. F. Loree, then general manager of the Pennsylvania lines west of Pittsburg, asking me to go to Pittsburg and see him on a matter of business, the nature of which his letter did not reveal. There had been a previous letter from this gentleman, received in Stettin, Germany, just as I was sailing for St. Petersburg, suggesting a meeting in Pittsburg. This was a number of weeks before my final departure from Germany for the United States.

At that particular time I did not give the letter its due attention. Russia seemed still to hold out promises which I thought more attractive than those located in other parts of the world.

On arriving in New York City in 1898, with fifty dollars in my pocket and no more in sight, I naturally bethought myself of the letter received from Mr. Loree. I notified him of my modest home-coming, and said that I would be glad to hear more about the business for me that he had in mind. His reply was to the effect that I should meet him in Pittsburg, and would there learn about the matter which he was minded to take up with me. I spent three days in New York City at the home of a friend. During this time I was "put up" at a certain club by a friend whom I had learned to know through the writing business. At this club I met various editors, writers, and, I suppose, publishers. I was so elated with my sudden elevation into club standing in the writing business in New York City, that I immediately went back from the club to the home of my host, and told him in glee what a fine beginning I had made. Neither he nor his wife seemed to care very much for my sudden rise in the literary world in New York, *via* the club end of it. I remember that they looked at each other very significantly on my telling them with happiness how I had been so happily received by the writers' craft.

That look made it very pleasant for me to consider other pastures, and the invitation to proceed to Pittsburg was accepted with alacrity. Arriving there, I had

a few of my fifty dollars left. But there was no immediate prospect of their remaining in my pocket.

It is not always easy, even though invited to meet him and expecting to meet him, to find the general manager of a railroad. In my case, what happened? I found my man out on the road, seeing to it that certain repairs were made, and that he personally should know that they were made quickly, and that I must wait a while, perhaps two or three hours, perhaps longer. Pittsburg and its gloom did not make any plainer to me, during this waiting spell, what I was in Pittsburg for. I remember that I went to a hotel, and tried to write an article on that poor miserable creature, the Russian workingman. In the course of a few hours I was notified by telegram that I was to proceed to where the repairs were being made, and there make the general manager's acquaintance. I followed out these instructions, and I learned to know a man to whom I am indebted for my start in life at home after those wonderland years in Europe and Asia. I remember that I met my benefactor in a signal tower where he was patiently waiting for confirmation that his instructions had been carried out. I remember how he looked at me. No chief of police has ever "sized me up" the way that general manager did. He looked into my personality as it is not pleasant to have any one's personality looked into, unless he believes that he is doing the right thing. This is only a small incident in our acquaintance, but I have never forgotten it.

Before long the repairs were completed, the required

confirmation of instructions delivered was received, and Mr. Loree and I returned to Pittsburg in his car. On the car not a word was said about the business that he had in mind, and I was careful enough not to disturb a man who had probably attended to ten things to my one during that day.

In Pittsburg, after supper at the club, we went to the theater and there saw a light play. Naturally, I could not help guessing about the business that the general manager had in mind for me. The play over, we returned to the club, and there, for the first time, I learned what the gentleman wanted.

As I remember his words now, he said to me: "The tramp trouble in the United States has interested me as a railroad man. I take it that it has interested you temperamentally and, perhaps, as a student of economics.

"It occurred to me, on taking hold of this railroad property as a general manager, that I would see whether I could not help to eliminate the tramp trouble for the railroad as well as for the public. It was not a question in my mind about the possibility of the tramp being as bad a man as some have painted him, nor was it the question of doing the honest but unfortunate and penniless train-rider an injury. The thing I had in mind to do, and have tried to do, was to clear the property intrusted to my hands of that riffraff population which has been infesting American railroads for so many years.

"I feel like this. Taken any way you like it, a railroad in a State is one of its biggest citizens. My position as general manager did not call upon me to exercise

the theoretical notion of a railroad's position as a citizen in a State. Nevertheless, I said to myself: 'If I clean up my property as regards this riffraff population I am possibly contributing to the fulfillment of my citizenship.'"

At these words I looked at my possible employer pretty carefully. I have never had any reason to believe that as a citizen he has not struggled to do what, in his mind, seemed to be the right thing. He then and there made an impression upon me which I shall never forget. Mind you, I had just come over to this country. It was my business to find something that would make money for me as soon as possible. Mind you, I had gone to a man who knew and managed thirty thousand men.

He said to me: "What I wish you would do is to go over the property under my management, and make such a report as you see fit about the tramp conditions."

I said to him: "What do you think that will be worth?"

He said: "Well, what do you think it will be worth?"

I needed the money, there was not much more in sight at that time, whether I went on tramp or not anyhow, and I replied: "Well, I suppose that ten dollars a day would be an even price."

The general manager replied: "I think that's fair. I suppose you know how to proceed?"

"I think that I can get back in the old line without much trouble," I returned.

The general manager said: " Go ahead, and find out whatever you can. Whether the police force that I have instituted has been successful or not in stopping the tramp evil, I do not know. I say that I do not know because I cannot possibly be personally on every spot, covering five States, including thirty thousand men. It is pretty hard to keep track of all that you order to be done. I am speaking to you purely from the point of view of a railroad manager. It's pretty hard to run a railroad as you would like to have it run. This tramp business, this riffraff, this slum population that I find on my lines is, of course, a detail in the work that has been set before me.

" In my endeavor to keep my lines as clean as possible, not only as a citizen, but also as a railroader, I have tried to build up a railroad police. The States through which my lines run protect me only incidentally. I find that when your friends, the tramps, are arrested by town or village officials they are easily turned loose. I wanted to know how the situation could be changed, and I proceeded to look into the matter. The result was that I made up my mind that the railroad company *must protect itself.* I found that certain men, called detectives, were, at times, endeavoring to keep tramps off trains on our lines. I found, furthermore, that these men, or detectives, were not attending to their duty as I believe it should be attended to.

" Consequently I got to wondering how this matter could be better attended to. I looked over the expense accounts for police purposes, and found that our people

were paying what seemed to me an exorbitant sum for very poor service. It seemed to me that police matters on a railroad, on account of the negligence on the part of villages and towns, should be organized and given a standing, which, on account of our lackadaisical procedure against crime in this country, was justified.

" You will find on our property a certain number of qualified policemen. Perhaps I should say ' patrolmen.' We do not use the word detective on this property. They are divided up according to divisions, and the moral deportment of the different communities in which they are placed. My idea has been to try to police our property just as a city is policed.

" What I should like to have you do is to go over our property and see whether our police force has been successful in ridding our lines, and, to some extent, the communities which they touch, from tramp immigration. How do you feel about the matter? "

Here was a problem which led right back into all that land of *Wanderlust* which I supposed that I had given up in so far as it applied to tramp life. However, as so many well-known people say: " Beggars cannot be choosers," I undertook the job of finding out for the general manager exactly what the tramps had to say about his lines as protected by his police. Eighteen years before this interview, the general manager's lines, to my own knowledge, were so littered up with tramps, and tramp camps that the Fort Wayne road in particular then was known as an " easy " road to beat between Chicago and Pittsburg. It was as bad as the Baltimore

and Ohio Railroad, which in those days was called "The Dope."

These roads were ridden promiscuously by all kinds of men, women and children who did not pay fare. When they got into a box car they thought much nonsense. The things that were done and said among all these people at that time would make too scandalizing reading now. If there are slums in our cities, there are no greater slums anywhere in the world, barring no crime, passion, or idiosyncracy, than were found on the "Dope" and the Fort Wayne roads in my tramp days.

I looked over the general manager's property. Dressed as a tramp, acting as a tramp, living and sleeping as a tramp, I surrounded his lines until I knew what the tramp world had to say about his railroad police idea. I found wherever I went, in Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati, Wheeling, or Pittsburg, that tramps said: "There are easier roads to beat than the Fort Wayne."

It was hard work to go back into tramp life. I had some hard knocks, as regards storms and other misadventures in various places. Yet, with it all, it brought back to me a number of remembrances of earlier tramp days.

At the end of one month on the "Road" I went to the general manager and told him that I had no desire to ride his trains—that there were so many other trains and roads that were easier. I believed that, in order to complete my investigations, if he cared to have me proceed further, I should have a pass, good on every movable thing that he had on his property. We discussed this

matter in some detail. Eventually, the general manager consented to my proposition, and I was given a pass, good over all his lines, and I had with me the moral support of his position.

I tackled the tramp problem from a new point of view. It was my privilege to ride on practically every passenger train, every freight train, and on all engines that it should be my fate to meet. The general manager also gave me a letter instructing his employees to let me pass. I now know that it puzzled the general manager's police force to comprehend my compromising position on the road. The police force said: "Who is this young fellow out here looking us up?"

I was called to order one night, in Ohio, by a captain of the newly instituted police force, for riding on a caboose of a freight train. I was getting off the caboose to find out about something which was a matter of detail at the time, and had got back to the steps of the caboose, when the captain stepped up to me and said: "What are you doing on this train?" I looked at him. He looked at me. We then and there decided that there was no particular disagreement between us. But I have to say that during the second month of my investigations for the general manager, his police force could not make out why I was on the property with all my credentials, and my confusing diminutive form and face. One of my best friends to-day, who was then at the head of the police, was interested in my proceedings.

As an illustration of how men keep track of each other, he had his men keep track of me. At the same

time, I think he must have realized that our superior officer was behind such an errand as I was on. He had the good sense to say to himself: "Well, if that is the Boss's work, I'd better leave it alone." But he kept his men looking out for me, which is only human nature.

One of the experiences that I had during this second month in the interests of railroading, so far as its traffic applies to tramps, occurred in Ohio. During my extraordinary privileges as a railroading tramp, and with all my credentials from the general manager's office, I picked up a freight train going west of Mansfield, Ohio, upon which I nevertheless found myself in difficulties. I saw three tramping negroes on this train. I saw them get on the train—largely a coal train so that one could see from the caboose window exactly what was going on—and went after them, car after car full of coal, until I reached the biggest of the three. The train was going at the rate of about twenty miles an hour. I snatched the hat of the biggest one that I could see and said, with some reminiscences in mind, I must confess: "You have your nerve with you, riding on this road. Hit the gravel."

The negro looked up at me, as if all the majesty of the law had been suddenly invested in my humble person, and said, with a truly pathetic tramp touch: "Cap, the train is going a little too hard." He received back his hat, and he and his two companions were asked by me, in no uncertain terms, to leave the train at a certain siding.

I made up my mind that those three negroes should

get no train leaving the siding—a resting place for tramps, and for trains that needed coal and steam to go farther on. I went to the signal tower and telegraphed east and west for an officer to get to the signal tower in question and arrest the trespassers as soon as possible. This may seem a hard thing for a man to do, who had been through what I had. But I was responsible to the general manager of that property. I was also responsible to my own idea of integrity, and I believed in my inmost soul that it was the thing to do.

The negroes wanted to fight me. I was carrying a toothbrush at the time. While at the coaling station the negroes lingered around and made every effort to catch every freight train that was going out their way. I rode every one of these going in their direction to within about one hundred yards of their waiting place. Finally, the last "run," as they well knew, had gone. As I dropped off the last freight train that they were not swift enough to catch, I walked toward them, and was greeted with these words: "Do you think you run this road? If you do, you'll get a bullet hole through you so soon that you won't know what struck you."

I thought of my toothbrush as the only weapon I had. I thought also of the willingness on the part of those negroes to revenge themselves, and I thought still more closely about the distance between where I stood and the coaling station. It so happened that my bluff went. I said to the negroes: "If there is any shooting to be done here I'll begin it." The negroes left me alone, and I left them alone. I could not, however, get over the idea

that they had infringed on my territory as investigator, police officer, or anything else that you want to call it. The result of the experience was that the police officer that I had telegraphed for toward the east appeared at the coaling station as soon as he could, and that we rode on together to the next village. There I said to him: "I think we will catch those negroes not very far away from here." He picked up the town marshal and away we went down the track to find those negroes. We found them.

Dusk was just coming on, and they were sitting alongside the track. The policeman from the east drew his revolver, went up to them, and said, much to their surprise: "I place you under arrest." The negroes wilted, and all of us went to the station house of the nearest village. They were given an immediate hearing. They said that they had not been seen on any train, other than a passenger train on which they had paid their fares, during all the years of their existence. The justice said: "Do you suppose that that man is going to come here and tell me that he saw you on a certain freight train when he didn't see you on that freight train?"

One of the negroes replied: "I never saw that man before in my life." This was the man whose hat I had taken when I told him to get off the train. The justice gave all three a thirty-day sentence to the Canton Workhouse. The next morning, the negroes were prisoners of the local authorities. By these local authorities they were handcuffed, put on a train, and started for their destination. Foolishly, I not only followed them in

Canton, but I went up with them, in the street car, to the workhouse. During that ride I heard all the hard things that can possibly be said about any one.

This experience and my participation in it may not seem so very creditable to one who had himself been a tramp. But what did I learn about those negroes? They had been employees of a circus, had got drunk and into a row, and had left their positions as circus men. So far as I have been able to make out, they had no right to have a free ride anywhere.

This is merely one of the incidents that fell to my lot during the second month. Of course there were many others, which interested me at the time, to think over, but which would not interest the reader.

The main thing I learned to believe in and expect in my general manager was a great efficiency. All through my tramp experiences at his request, I found, even in *tramp* life, that the great thing is getting there and doing something. My report to him about the general ability of the police force, which he and his subordinates had got together for the purpose of completely ridding the property of the tramp nuisance, was that I thought he had at least got the Fort Wayne road so cleaned up, in that respect, that no " respectable " tramp would ride on it. In making this report I said to the general manager: " They are stealing coal on the Lake Shore Railroad. There is a man who told me that on the Lake Shore Railroad every twentieth train, before it gets forty miles out of Buffalo, gets dug into." On that same expedition for the general manager I ran up against two tramp camps

at the end of one of the " Short Lines " at Ashtabula. My interest at that time was not to disturb either camp at all. I went down to the Lake Shore Railroad, toward their coal chutes, and there I found two camps. The fires of these were being bountifully supplied by coal taken from the adjoining railroad company. My position was peculiar. Tramps, and criminals for that matter, do not like to have any one approach what they believe to be their property. I went to one of the camps, and sat down on a railroad tie. Pretty soon a person of unquestionable importance in his own tramp line, said to me: " Have you a match? "

" I think I have. I'll see."

" If you find one, go over and build your own fire."

I did so, and was left more or less in peace.

CHAPTER XXIII

RAILROAD EXPERIENCES

AT that time there was a collection of men, called the "Lake Shore Push." These men thought that they had the Lake Shore Railroad in their hands, from the criminal end of it, or, perhaps, I should say, the hold-up end of it. Their history is a matter hard to explain. They had been known on or about the Lake Shore Railroad, to my knowledge, for twenty years easily.

They are worth while considering in a paragraph or two as showing how criminal "mobs" are made up.

The Lake Shore Railroad for some reason or other has been infested with box-car robbers, hold-up men, for about the number of years suggested. For some reason, the Lake Shore gang found it convenient to organize itself in so far as organization is possible in criminal life. Criminals of different types got together, and said: "We will run this road as we think it should be run according to our ways of looking at things." The management of the road had nothing to say that was of any use.

So the Lake Shore gang proceeded, and robbed cars, even threw a steer off a car when it wanted to hold a

barbecue, held up the polite Ohio politician beating his way to the extent of forty cents, had all those plants supposed to be between Buffalo and Chicago, and generally made themselves a criminal nuisance.

The Lake Shore gang consisted of the following types: the desperate laboring man (?) who is willing to grapple with your throat on account of a dollar or two—I mean the hold-up man that you hear so much about in the Middle West; the discouraged criminal who knew that he was discouraged, but thought he might possibly, under spurious cover, get a "stake" on professionally criminal lines; the hard-up man who was led along by the other conspirators in the game; the boy of eighteen, who had made some miserable mistake in his home, had to get away from that home, and had fallen into the hands of scheming men; and the woman of the street who had her reasons for knowing anything about the Lake Shore gang. The Lake Shore gang, it can be said, grew out of the idea that when you can be imposed upon, you will stand for it. What they are doing now I do not know. It may be that they are amusing themselves as in days of old. All I want to say here is that this was the company I had good chances of falling in with when striking the general manager's terminals on the lakes. The Lake Shore Railroad and the Nickel Plate, as it was called, took up the full responsibility of all tramp nonsense after certain department heads had done their best to relieve both of these roads of pronounced deficiencies and crimes.

As I have said, I found that, at Ashtabula, the tramps

were burning up the Lake Shore Company's coal, the Nickel Plate Company's coal—put the two together and call them the Vanderbilt lines if you like—and that the Lake Shore gang were robbing people right and left on every freight train that went over the Vanderbilt lines. I found also that the Vanderbilt lines did not pay the slightest respect to the protection of their patrons, as regards pickpockets and other gentry of that character, on their passenger trains, otherwise than by employing a man who feverishly ran up and down their territory—let us say between Toledo and Cleveland—took his lunches where he could buy them for from ten to twenty-five cents, and tried to carry out the whole game for the Vanderbilt interests between the points mentioned. This man was supposed to be the police force of that district. The reason he took so many quick lunches is because he had too much to do. In some ways, I believe that he tried to serve the Vanderbilt interests. But no man can cover such a district, if he be all alone—as it is alleged that he was—and attend to all of the details that will come up in police life on the Vanderbilt lines or on any other line.

This man I did not meet. I heard about him, from time to time, taking hungry lunches on the Lake Shore trains, passenger and freight.

This man, so far as the public is concerned, passenger or freight, did no more to protect the public than does a mosquito in New Jersey when it tries mercenary intentions upon an innocent suburbanite. In my opinion, the Lake Shore Railroad, in its employ of this one man to

cover so much territory, did not honestly stand up as a citizen in our United States.

My employer, the general manager, had in mind something else.

He is the man, who, when the Johnstown flood occurred, built the railroad bridge over the turbulent river in twenty-four hours. In saying that he built it, I mean that he knew how to get men to help him build it.

The same determination that he had in building that bridge, the same character, came out in his determination that his railroad line, so far as he could effect it, must be free of the riffraff population which was disturbing it. So he organized a police force and therewith proceeded to take care of that riffraff population. He did it to a nicety. He put a man at the head of it whose name I shall mention later on. He got hold of this man through the Pinkerton National Detective Agency.

The big fellow went into the game prepared to fight his particular game to a finish. The general manager sat off and wondered.

The whole world knows, more or less, the history of the Pullman strike. It was a strike fought, perhaps, with certain rightful labor interests in view. It was a strike, however, which was as cruel as any that has been known in this country. It was a mean thing on the part of employer, and on the part of employees. The wonder is that there was not more bloodshed. Men who undertake what the strikers of the Pullman Company did undertake, are most certainly considering trouble in its worst features. However they went ahead,

as a last forgiveness, they asked the sympathy of the public and were by the mercy of the then considerate, all-wise, all-grasping Pullman Company, turned over to the mercies of the United States Government troops.

General Miles appeared in Chicago with his troops. He was approached by the general manager, and asked this question: "What are your troops out here for if they are not going to stop the ruin of our property?"

"That is my business," said General Miles.

"True enough, but they are burning up my cars, and so far as I can see, your troops are not doing one thing to defend United States property."

Again General Miles replied that what he was doing was wholly within his province. The general manager did not attempt to indicate to General Miles that his line of business conflicted with the general's.

Here were two men, both of them masters in their own lines. Mr. Cleveland had ordered the United States troops to Chicago. General Miles had nothing else to do but to obey. He went to Chicago with his troops. There was no shooting done. The question is, whether there should not have been some shooting done. Labor in this country has arrived at a point where it is so arrogant that it must be shot at. If it thinks that trade unionism will protect it, it is much deceived.

I must tell a story of something that happened during the Pullman strike at Chicago.

A big man thought that he could proceed against one of the regulars. He started to do so. The regular said to him: "You must keep off this property."

The big man said: "Huh! You don't run the whole world."

The regular said: "Get off this property, or I will make trouble for you."

The big man said: "Huh! You have another guess coming."

The regular said: "Get off this property quick."

The big man seemed to want to linger, and the regular went after him with his bayonet and struck him where he understood that he had received his due attention.

The strike was finished. Millions of dollars had been lost. The general manager returned to his ordinary business, and settled down to ordinary work again.

General Miles doubtless retired to his retreat.

There is a point to be made here about the efficiency of the militia and the regulars. What did the militia do during all this unfortunate experience? Not enough to let an ordinary suburban train go on its quiet way. Mr. Grover Cleveland saw the necessity of immediate protection for the United States mail, and ordered the regulars to Chicago. The regulars, merely by their presence, did more than the whole militia of the State of Illinois could have done or would have done. The militia are too afraid of shooting brothers and sisters. The regulars are soldiers, and obey the commands. My friend, the general manager, later on had to take care of the body of President McKinley. What did he do? The special train was there, the special policemen were there, and the special orders were there. President McKinley's body went to Washington

with as cleverly appointed a bodyguard as one can ordinarily find. Poor man, he lay in his coffin not caring whether he was protected or not. A man stood on the front of the train, a man was on a middle platform, a man was on the rear end, and one or two men were inside. So this man was taken home, guarded by Democrats, and I think Socialists in theory.

This is what the general manager of a road did to get an assassinated President to the National Capital. It was only a small courtesy, because the man was dead. But it was one of those courtesies which can never be forgotten by a man's friends, and by any whom we have taken an interest in. To have done this thing efficiently was something worth doing. There are people who, to-day, think that they can rob the tomb of Lincoln. They tried it not so very long ago. Their intentions were most completely balked.

To frustrate people who might try to do any injury to a President of the United States while in transit over his road strikes me as being a highly creditable proceeding on the part of any general manager.

During my acquaintance with the general manager I learned to know his then chief of police, Mr. C. E. Burr. Mr. Burr had kept track of me during my investigations for the general manager, but had not made any particular effort to locate me. He knew his men pretty well, he knew his idea of railway police organization pretty well, and, after that, believing that he was giving a square deal to his employer, he did not care who was looking over his territory.

More about Mr. Burr, whom I have to thank for my first genuine introduction to graft and its practitioners. Without him and his assistance I could have hardly gotten so quickly into this subject.

My report to the general manager delivered, after two months of pretty hard work, I returned to New York City to take up the next promising thing that came to hand.

CHAPTER XXIV

TRYING TO LIVE BY MY PEN

AS I have said, my friends and acquaintances in New York were comparatively few at the start. As I hark back over the beginning year in that city I do not believe that I knew intimately more than six men, and they, like myself, were also beginners so far as New York was concerned. Strangely enough nearly every one of us came from somewhere in the West, a fact which leads me to ask whether in such a city as New York Westerners, Southerners and Easterners do not inevitably drift together through some strange law? Certainly that little coterie of young men of which I had the honor to be a part, came together, for better or for worse, unannounced, not caring whom they met and yet pushed on by circumstances to band together as Westerners.

We were called the Griffou push. Nearly every member of this organization was a writer of some kind, or intended to be. Perhaps I was the first of the original intimates in this little gathering to take up residence at the Griffou Hotel in Ninth Street, which for several years was our regular rendezvous and from which we got our corporate appellation. I began to live there

almost immediately after my preliminary work for the Pennsylvania Company. There was something quaintly foreign about the place at that time that satisfied my soul, and it was located in the Washington Square neighborhood, which will never be outdone in my affections by any other in New York. Although I have lived all over the city, somehow on leaving the ferry, coming back to New York on a journey, my steps naturally turn toward lodgings near the Washington arch. I think that several of the other young men have always felt likewise about this locality. Anyhow, here I began my fight for a place in the city's business. I have said that we were writers, or rather aspirants for distinction, as such. Why all of us should have picked out this activity as the one in which we thought we could do best I can hardly explain. That we were overweaningly literary on first coming together does not seem to me to be the case. One or two had written what were called academic essays at the time, but none, I think, had done much money-making writing. For some reason—perhaps it looked like the easiest thing to do—we all threw our lot in with that army of men and women in New York who try to make their living with their pens.

I tried first for a position as a police reporter. I thought that if my experience and training had prepared me to write about anything in a big city they had fitted me for reportorial work as an observer in police and criminal circles. My ambition in this direction came to nothing. I honestly tried for the position in question on several newspapers, but the editors did not see their

way clear to be enthusiastic about my ability. For several years after starting out in New York I continued to annoy editors with my notions on their police reporting, but without avail. As I had once been ambitious to be foreign correspondent, and thought that with perseverance I could fill the bill, so, during the years that I begged to be made a police reporter, another disappointment and chagrin had to be jotted down in my notebook. Perhaps it is just as well now that I did not succeed in my efforts with the editors along these lines. But whether this be so or not I propose here, in what is my own book and nobody else's, to give a short outline of what I believe police reporting could be developed into if undertaken seriously.

In late years I have become convinced that that daily newspaper which will keep a careful record of criminal goings on in this country—not locally, but taking in all of the country that it can cover—doing this day after day conscientiously, presenting to the public the criminal facts about ourselves as we make them—will be doing a work which will make its police reporting invaluable and will earn for it the grateful thanks of all students of crime.

In a way I have in mind for a daily record of the nation's crime, the presentation of our annual crime as found in the Chicago *Tribune* when it makes up our debit and credit account along these lines. It seems to me perfectly feasible for a newspaper to gather the daily news in the criminal world, so far as it should be given to the public, in as interesting and as useful a way as that

of the *Tribune* and certain other newspapers. I firmly believe that it would do good for us to see ourselves just as we are in the criminal looking-glass every morning of the year, not excepting Sundays. Statistics, quiet accounts of crimes committed, anecdotes, illustrative incidents proving no theories, but merely making graphic the volume of crime in our midst and its intensity—all these factors would probably have to come into the scheme I have in mind. The essential factor, however, must be that inexorable display of our criminality as a people. There is no gainsaying the fact that we are all ready, or are soon going to be, if jail and court records tell the truth, the most criminally minded nation on earth. This is not a pleasant fact or prospect. The function of the police reporter, as I understand it, should be to keep this forlorn state of affairs ever present in our minds until we wake up and say that this can no longer be. Such a man, if he does his work well, is deserving of as high a salary as his managing editor. High crime in the United States is one of the most appalling problems staring us in the face and demanding a solution. The description of it, its awful significance, its menacing proportions—these things are not yet treated daily, as they ought to be, by any newspaper known to me.

To all this there are those who will reply: "But our children read the newspapers, our mothers, wives and sisters read them. Why increase the criminal copy in the papers which must go into our homes? Why not suppress as much as possible all reference to what is criminal and sinful?"

My reply to these queries is that crime has become such a part of our national character that it is high time that we have a criminal thermometer indicating to us honestly and fairly our criminal feverishness. The police reporter as here considered may be likened unto the orderly in our hospitals, who puts a thermometer somewhere in or about us and attempts to determine our physical temperature. The orderly comes to us regularly, according to the physician's orders throughout the day; and at night, or on the following morning, the attending physician receives an accurate report of how our pulse has beaten for twelve or twenty-four hours, as the case may be.

I throw out the suggestion that our well-trained police reporter acquainted with police conditions and police departments, should be able to tell us every night and morning how we are getting along as criminals and as citizens of the republic, with our welfare at heart.

But to return to the Griffou push and to those early years of struggle with editors and what-not. Perhaps the finest sensation I experienced during those years was found in weekly trips to Park Row, usually to the *Sun* office, where I handed in my bill for space and collected such money as was due me. I shall never forget how proud I was one Saturday, when, with seventeen dollars' space money in my inside pocket, I strolled back to Ninth Street, through the Bowery—or the Lane, as "Chuck" Conners prefers to call it. I remember passing a dime museum. That old boyish fever to see the animals and the wheels go round came over me. It is

impossible to tell now how much the visit to this miraculous institution cost me. I do recall, however, that on arriving later on at the haunt of the Griffou push my seventeen dollars were in a strangely dilapidated state. I have never seen several of them since this experience, but on looking back upon it I cannot say that I regret their loss. To be able on a Saturday night to foregather with the push and tell a story about how you had been "done" in the Lane or elsewhere caused much merriment, and I think healthy criticism. As beginners in the great city, as strugglers fighting to make our way, as men who knew that the years were passing by altogether too rapidly—who does not feel this way, say after thirty?—we were decidedly critical of one another, and were very prone to tell an alleged delinquent member of our company what we thought he ought to do to make a success of himself. But, after all, we were youngsters in spirit and temperament, and were far more given to laughing at our gatherings than to moping or solemnizing.

It hardly seems fair for me to mention here the names of the others in this aggregation, although I would be inclined to say only friendly things of them. Our original four, as the Griffou push was constituted as far as I am concerned, have remained staunch friends, if not boys, to this day. Later the push developed into a larger collection of men, and I am sorry to say that some of these newcomers have passed on into another world.

The men that I began with I will call Hutch, Alfred and Morey. Morey now owns an automobile, and,

when I send him copy, is in a powerful position to turn said copy down. Hutch is writing books, and every now and then writes us how glad he is that the days of the push are no more and that he can bask under the Italian sun in his own righteousness. Alfred has become a literary philosopher and thinks that beginning in New York, as we did, looks better at a distance.

CHAPTER XXV

WITH THE POWERS THAT PREY

IT has been my experience, and I suppose that of most men, that the attainment of a purpose is always accompanied by a touch of disappointment, weariness of spirit, even disgust, and such is in proportion to the amount of effort that has been put forth in order to attain. This, by the way, is but one of the penalties that *Wanderlust* imposes on those who listen to and obey its compelling call. I know whereof I speak, you must remember. Time and again when reaching the goal appointed by my vagabond instincts I have had a *mauvais quatre d'heure* of it when trying to overcome this reaction of thought and feeling that was sure to set in and last for a longer or shorter period, according to what lay ahead of, or around me. At such junctures, do what I would, there came the insistent queries: "Well, and what have you gotten in return for it all?" "Have your efforts brought you a single thing that is of real value to you?" "How about the time and strength that you have wasted in securing—what?" "What next and why?" "How is it all going to end?"—and many more disturbing suggestions of a similar sort. Of course, the spell of the "blues," as I was pleased to call

these promptings of conscience or common-sense—I think the terms to be interchangeable—would be followed by my taking to the road again, literally or otherwise. But the inquisition of myself *by* myself was so certain to be waiting for me at the close of the tramp or exploit, that I often half-dreaded, rather than welcomed, the termination of the latter.

These things are said because I am reminded that, during all my wanderings, I never felt the "chill of achievement" strike me so sharply as it did on that April afternoon, when the liner on which I had returned to America left quarantine and began to steam slowly up the bay. Around and ahead were sights that I had been dreaming of and longing for many moons to again feast my eyes on. The Staten Island and Bay Ridge shores, flushed with tender green, slid by us; Liberty lifted a high beckoning hand of welcome, the Brooklyn warehouses, Governor's Island, New Jersey's fringe of masts and funnels, the fussy tugs, the blunt-nosed, business-like ferryboats, and Manhattan itself, with its line of sky-scrapers like unto jagged teeth, chewing the upper air, were all so familiar and had been so much desired! And yet came a sudden apathy regarding them and a dissatisfaction with them and myself that seemed to sicken and palsy. I actually began to wish that I need not get off the boat at all, but, instead, might stay on her until she turned her nose again toward the lands in which, a week or so before, I had been so utterly discontented. And why? Who can explain the hidden springs of the human mentality?

You would hardly believe it, if I were to tell you, that a like attitude or condition of mind is by no means uncommon in the case of a crook (commonly called a "gun") who has finished a long "bit" or term in prison. Naturally, the man puts most of his time in thinking and planning about what he will do when the day comes for him to shake hands with the governor and to take train to where he may be going. But the reaction sets in with the hour of release, and there comes a more or less marked distaste for, or dislike of, the very things to which the ex-prisoner has been looking forward for years perhaps. Sometimes the man has been working out a way by which he can "square it," or live an honest life in the future. I am sorry to say, however, that the "guns" who, having "done their spots," keep on the square thereafter, are few indeed. Usually the thoughts of the "lagged" criminal are directed toward perfecting means and methods of "nicking a swell swag and doing the get-away"—in other words, of stealing a considerable amount of money or valuables without being arrested. But, as with the rest of us, the "gun" seems to suffer from temporary brain-fag when he comes into physical contact with things and affairs that before had been known to him mentally. So, instead of his plans being put in action, a newspaper item like this not infrequently appears:

John Smith, no address, was arrested last evening at Broadway and Fortieth Street, charged with being drunk and disorderly and assaulting an officer. In court this morning, Policeman Jones said that the prisoner had insulted and annoyed a number of citizens, had kicked over

From photograph taken in St. Petersburg

Josiah Flynt, in His "Garb of the Road," while Tramping in Russia

Tramping with Reuben Thwaites.
"Josiah Flynt."

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the outside showcases of a tobacconist, and had struck Jones several times before he could be subdued. Smith was recognized in court as "Conkey," otherwise John Richardson, a crook, who was released from State Prison only a few days since at the termination of a four years' sentence for burglary. In view of his record, he was held in default of $2,000 bail for trial at Special Sessions.

It is well for us, who claim to belong to the respectable classes, that this pruning of intention in the presence of fact is the rule rather than the exception. The public would be in a pretty pickle if the Powers that Prey invariably gave practical expression to their prison-fed fancies; for these last, as I have reason to know, if they are put in operation, rarely fail to accomplish their purpose. Perhaps seventy-five per cent. of the really big "jobs" that are successfully "pulled off" have their inception in the "stir" or penitentiary, or in State prison, the details being worked out by the "mob" or gang with which the discharged "gun," the author of the "plant," is affiliated. As the crook who gets a term of years generally gets it on the score of his professional ability, and as there is little or nothing during his "bit" to interfere with his thinking of thoughts, it is no wonder that his schemes seldom miscarry if they ever reach the stage of actual test.

Outside of the criminal, it may be that we ourselves, and our friends, also, are none the worse because our powers of execution are numbed or hindered for a like reason. What an unbearable world this would be, if every man could give expression to the fads and fancies that, to use the phrase of the Under World, "wos eatin'

him"! And what a readjustment of social, commercial and personal affairs would be necessary in order to insure one the bare essentials of existence under the circumstances!

I'll pass over the hour or so of gloom and doubt that was mine before our steamer tied up at her pier, and merely say, that, as soon as I descended the gangway and touched what, under the circumstances, stood for dry land, my depression went by the board and I was my own man again. I found myself eying the awaiting crowd inquisitively, in order to see whether it contained any familiar faces, welcome or the reverse. I may add that, for reasons which it isn't necessary to explain, I had not notified any of my friends of my intention to return to the United States. Hence a meeting with acquaintances would be the outcome of chance rather than of design.

It was with a mixture of pique, anger and regret, tempered—if I must confess it—with a touch of amusement, that I realized that my welcome home came in the shape of a broad smile from as clever a crook as ever turned a trick in Wall Street with the aid of a mahogany-fitted suite of offices and—the law itself.

It is a somewhat natural, although, if you come to think it over, rather an unreasonable expectation, that prompts us to look upon those whom we first meet on landing on a foreign, or on our native shore, as representative of the people of the country in general. But, after all, while the longshore population of every land is rather different from the rest of the inhabitants, the for-

mer, in Europe at least, exhibit the national earmarks to a degree sufficient to satisfy the average tourist. I need hardly add that such earmarks are, to an extent, of a distinctive and significant nature. The costumes, gestures, manners and the language of the longshore advance guard, always seem to me to have a due relation each to each, and to those other things that the traveler meets further inland.

Something like these thoughts came to me, as I mechanically returned the smile of the man who was making his way through the crowd, dodging the line of stewards and baggage that was swirling over the ship's side. It was a silly and unpatriotic thought, no doubt, and it was probably parented by a variety of factors, including my familiarity with the Under World, but it came to me with cynical force and humor that there was something not entirely inappropriate in the fact that a well-dressed, amiable-looking, and apparently prosperous individual, of devious morals and crooked methods, should be so much in evidence on the threshold of a land, so to speak.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I don't wish to imply by the foregoing that we are a nation of criminals large and small, and that, hence, we were, in this instance, properly represented on the pier head by my smiling friend. But I do earnestly believe that the American public does not, as yet, realize the danger that arises from the big masses becoming accustomed to the current and growing dishonesty of the small classes. I say "accustomed to," meaning thereby that the public ap-

parently accepts the dictum that if a man or corporation steals on a sufficiently big scale, not only is the law paralyzed by the legal lights who are willing to accept retaining fees from thieves, but, in addition, our youths are taught to regard such thievery as equivalent to success.

My observation has taught me that crime is like water —it steeps from the top. A nation is, more or less, patterned after its prominent men. If these, when subjected to moral analysis, turn out to be simply " dips " who operate on a large scale, so much the worse for the nation, for, while the example of the men in question may not be followed in degree by the multitude, it surely is in kind. I'll defy any one to disprove this assertion by means of municipal or historic data. On the other hand, I could, if necessary, show that, in repeated cases, financial *coups*—so called—and " deals," and all the rest of the legalized robberies in high places, were followed or accompanied by a rushing business in the magistrates' or criminal courts.

Once upon a time, " Chi "—as Chicago is known to the Under World—was the headquarters for crooks of all grades and types—including the authors of wheat corners and so forth. But New York is or will be, so I take it, the gathering place for most of the manipulators of the financial world. I venture the prophecy that, when the fact is established that the metropolis is their favorite roosting place, there will be a corresponding activity on the part of the local " guns " of all descriptions, budding or full blown, from the office boy, who swipes postage stamps, to the up-to-date gopher-man,

who cleans out a "peter" or safe with the help of a pocket laboratory and electric drills.*

I do not think that the needs of this story call for the name of the man with the smile. Up to the time of writing, he has kept out of prison, and the Upper World holds him to be a reputable person in consequence—which is the way of the Upper World, which judges a man on the score of results rather than on that of actions. That he and the other members of his mob are not viewing the Hudson scenery through barred windows, is, I believe, due to the fact that one of his pals is an astute and eminently respectable lawyer, who, because he knows his business as thoroughly as he does, can make the law serve the very crooks whom it is supposed to suppress. By this it will be gathered that he was and is one of those sharks known as financial lawyers, who infest the tempestuous seas of the financial district. He is a member of the Union League, and of a Fourth Avenue church, and has been identified with several citizens' movements having to do with the betterment of certain phases of municipal administration. He is one of the meanest unmugged "guns" that has ever helped to graft pennies from a sick widow's chimney stocking. This is no figure of speech. The enterprises which he and his mob spring on the public are especially designed to appeal to the

*Mr. Flynt's prophecy has been approximately fulfilled. Without subscribing to his suggestion that the majority of our great financiers are "crooks," it is certain that the metropolis is just now, and has been for some time past, suffering from a crime-wave of an almost unparalleled height and vehemence. The pages of the daily newspapers and the admissions of the police authorities furnish proof thereof.

hopes and fears of those whose knowledge of financial affairs and personal means are equally small. The victims invariably include a goodly percentage of women who, being without advisers, are anxious to invest their scant savings, and having an idea that Wall Street is, somehow or other, a place for making money, hand over fist, stand ready to swallow the mendacious yarns that form the basis of the printed matter of the corporations or " pools " in question.

All grafting is of course bad from the viewpoint of the Upper World, although the Under World thinks otherwise. But I honestly believe that the real " dip," " moll-buzzer," " peter-man," " prop-getter," " thimble-toucher," " queer-shover," " slough-worker," " second-story man," or any other form of " gun," looks upon the " paper-pipers," such as my crook of the pier and his associates were, in much the same manner as a bank robber regards an East Side door-mat thief.

The last that I heard of the man, and that quite recently, was, that he and his pals were floating a company that allegedly proposed to manufacture and sell a paint " which entered into the substance of the material on which it was used, so became part and parcel of it, and, in consequence, was practically indestructible." I quote from the preliminary pamphlet that was sent to the " suckers " who nibbled at the glittering bait of the concern's newspaper advertisements.

The public would probably fight shy of—(we will call him John Robins, which approximates his trade name) if it knew that he has " done time " in Colorado

for burglary, and was run out of at least one other Western State for separating people from their money in a manner not recognized by city or mining camp laws. The "gun" fraternity—at least a large part of it—knows the facts in his case, but it isn't in the business of putting "the good guys next to the graft," or, in other words, of telling tales out of school.

The police and the Pinkerton Detective Agency are "wise"; but in these cases again, there is no official reason for action against Robins and his mob, while, on the other hand, there may be, and probably are, very excellent reasons for leaving him alone. I fancy that my readers will understand what I mean.

There was a sort of double end to my knowledge of and acquaintance with the man. Both began with complaints that had been sent to a metropolitan newspaper by a "sucker" whose jaws had gotten tangled up with and pricked by the hook that lay concealed in the Robins literary matter, which, in this instance, had to do with a land deal. For what he thought to be sufficient reasons, the city editor of the newspaper assigned me to investigate.

That same night, and by mere luck, I ran up against an old-time slope crook, "Split" Kelly by name, whom I had once known quite well. I asked him if he could give me any information about Robins, and he then told me that about the promoter which I have related and which, by the way, I later confirmed through other informants.

"How long ago since all this happened?" I asked.

" Fifteen or twinty years, maybe," answered " Split." " Thin ' Th' Tooth '—we called him that because wan uv his teeth in th' front of him was missin', ouin' to it bein' in th' way of the fist of a flatty [policeman]—giv out that he was goin' to square it. This was in 'Frisco, moind ye. An' th' squarin' took th' shape uv turnin' mouthpiece [informant to the police]. An' thin things began comin' agin the mob a-plinty. Big Bill Murray, I moind, was wan of the first that was hauled before th' Front Office [Police Headquarters] an' framed up fur a whit of a strong-arm job. Likewise, was there ' Sweet ' Schneider, a clever dip at thot, an' Jimmy Cole —he was stretched for a four spot—an' ' Cat ' Walters —an'—will, a dozen or more uv purty decint bhoys, the names un all uv which I disrimimber."

" But how about the percentage? " I asked, meaning the money paid to the police by crooks in return for " protection."

" In thim days," explained " Split," " thar was some sort of mix-up in the Front Office; some ov th' pircint bein' hild out by thim as had th' handlin' un it, as it came frish from th' guns. Ye'll onderston', Cig., by thot which soide th' beefin' came from. An' whin this Tooth uv yourn began his tip-off, the Front Office guys thot claimed they had bin done dirt, says, ' Ef we ain't in on the game as we should be, why, no game goes.' An' they begins to throw it in to us, as I've said. 'Twas th' owld story, Cig., th' owld story. Whin there's trouble in th' Front Office, 'tis worked off on the guns."

"And so, Split," said I, "you too got your bit through Tooth?" I had detected the tone of personal dislike to "Tooth" in the old fellow's talk, and made a guess at the reason.

"Ye guess roight, me chickin, though how ye guessed, th' divil knows, seein' 's I said nawthing. An' why th' mug put th' rap on me I'm not knowin'. T'ree days before I was jumped into th' sweat-box, I staked him to a tin-spot, for I'd touched for a fat leather." And "Split" scowled darkly.

"And what happened next?"

"Split" held an imaginary match between his thumb and forefinger, blew twice, and shook his head. By which I knew that the guns that had been squealed on, or the mob with whom they were associated, had twice tried to take Robins's life or "put his light out," and had failed in so doing.

"And then?"

"Thin," replied the veteran, easily, "me brave bucko framed it up that there was too much free lead floatin' in th' oir in thim parts, an' nixt comes news that he had been pinched for connin' a bunch of Eastern towerists at Manitou. But his fall-money [funds for such emergencies] greased the elbows [bribed the detectives] an' he made th' git away all right, all right, an' th' rest ye know. An' from that time on I nivir seen or hear uv him till wan day, three years since. Thin Clivir Saunders, an old-time 'Frisco gun, tills me that Tooth was gaffin [residing] in way up sthyle on Eighty-sivinth Street, Wist, aginst th' Park. I misdoubted, but Clivir

was roight, fur I stalled th' crib, an' sure enough me ex-friend comes out an' hops abourd his big gas-buggy an' away loike a wad uv easy. 'Oh, Ya,' ses I, 'somethin' doin'.' An' I tips off Clivir, an' th' nixt day whin Tooth's chaw—choof—what th' —— is that Frinch name, anyhow, Cig.?—whin th' feller with th' goggles sets her spinnin', a husky auto in which was me an' Clivir, slips in th' track uv Tooth an' nivir loses soight uv him 'te we marks him down in wan of thim Hivin-hitting office joints on lower Broadway.

"But I was dead leary of followin' on below th' Loine [the margin of the financial district in New York City, beyond which it is supposed that no crook can venture owing to the unwritten law of the police]. An' I ses so, to Clivir.

"'Ef 'tis safe for him,' says he, ''tis sure safe for we'—which was untrue, seein' that at th' toime I had a suspishun that I was bein' rapped by a mouthpiece regardin' a trifle of a book belongin' to th' twintieth cousin, more or liss, of somebody at th' Front Office. An' 'tis bad, as ye know, Cig., to buck th' Front Office dirict, or troo its twintieth cousin, fur, if ye do, th' fingers [policemen] 'll get hould uv ye by fair manes or by foul if they can.

"Howsinndever, we plants frind Tooth in his hang-out, an' th' nixt day pays him a visit, bein' drissed in our fall-togs [good clothes worn in court when on trial] an' intinding to borrow a trifle fur th' sake uv th' ould days. His nibs has a sure swell joint, with lots of nifty dames hittin' thim typewritin' masheens, an' lots of

rugs, an' brass, an' shiny wood, an' other things that we knowed was glimpsed to catch suckers.

"Well, me and Clivir said we wanted to chin Tooth about a private an' confidenshul investment—thim was Clivir's wurrds—only av coarse we didn't call him Tooth, but 'Misther Robins.' And prisintly a laad with a load uv gilt buttons on his second sthory, escoorts us into th' inside office of Tooth himself. An' an illigant joint uv it, it was at thot.

"Tooth knowed us at wanst as I see, and I see, too, his fingers sthray toward a black tin box on th' disk to his right.

"'Ye can sthay your hond, ould pal,' says Clivir, aisy like, 'we are goin' to act like the gints we look. Guns, the t'ree uv us maybe,' says he, 'but thare'll only be t'ree an' no more on exhibishun in this here palashul joint of yours, onless indade ye insist on a show-down, which is unlikely!' Clivir had a fine lay-out of langwidge, so he had.

"'Will,' says Tooth, looking at us with the swate exprission of a fly-cop who's had his leather reefed, 'what th' divil do ye two want?'

"'Me frind,' says Clivir, politely, an' pointin' to me, 'lost his sense uv touch during th' payriod that he spint in th' stir uv a famous Wistrin city, injoying th' grub an' ripose uv th' same through th' fayvour uv yourself, Tooth. An' bein' in destitoot circumstances ivir since, he is sure come to ask ye to make good for disthroyin' his manes uv turnin' a dishonist pinny.'

"Tooth nivir turned a hair, but I was discumforta-

ble whin I saw th' smoile uv him. He threw his chair a thrifle closer to th' telephone an' thin he says in a voice that was unplisintly quiet:

" ' Listen, you mugged guns. You think you kin call th' turn on me an' so want to touch for a few centuries [$100 bills], an' after that fur a few more, and after that some more yet. Let me till you that you'll not only not get a red-un out uv me, but, if ivir I see th' mugs uv ye within a half-acre of this joint again, I'll tip off th' Front Office an' put ye where ye belong. Oh, it's aisy enough fur me to do it, so it is. A wurrd to th' Big Man, or th' payple uptown, sayin' that two bustid crooks was thrying to blackmail me—me, th' prisident of a large an' repitable corporashun, to say nothing uv me soshul and personal sthanding—an' where wud ye be? How could th' half uv us in a game like I'm runnin', kape goin', if Mulberry Street an' the Big Man, didn't privint the likes uv you from botherin' thim uv us who've bin a bit mixed up with gun graft in th' past? To privint ye thin from takin' chances this side uv th' Loine in th' future, I give it to ye straight thot we're so will looked afther by thim who can do it—an' *do,* mind ye—thot th' touch uv this button or th' touch of this wan would mane a couple of husky fly-cops, who'd shake th' shell off ye, before ye got th' framin' up thot would make ye sick uv York fur th' rist of yer days. An' now git, th' pair of yez.' "

" An', Cig., we got, feelin' like th' sneak who foinds he's swiped a jar uv moldy pickles.

" ' I thought I knowed th' whole uv th' graft game,'

said Clivir, whin we'd got clear uv the joint, ' by theory, anyhow,' sez he, ' but, Split, take it from me, th' only people who's really on to it, an' knows th' size uv it, an' th' shape uv it, an' th' spread uv it, an' where it begins an' how it inds, an' *what's in it,* is th' Front Office an' th' guys behind it.'

" Which words was thrue, Cig.—they was sure thrue."

The next day, I called on Robins with the letter from the alleged victim of the land deal enterprise, asking him what he had to say about it.

He opened a desk, produced a box of cigars, passed them to me, and, looking me straight in the eyes, said, with a smile: " And what sort of answer do you want, anyhow? "

Whereupon I felt and saw that I was up against a cool, clever confidence man who had chosen to " work " in the Wall Street district instead of amid the environments of the usual sort.

Now you may or may not know it, but the confidence man of tip-top attainments cultivates the control and expression of his features with as much care as does the professional beauty—this for the reason that his looks are among his most valuable assets. For the first stage in " turning a trick," whether this be done in a Broadway hotel or a downtown office building, is for the operator to get a hold on the confidence of his victim by impressing him with his, the former's, frankness and honesty through the medium of his steady gaze, cheery smile and sincerity of expression in general. But " wise " people

are not taken in by these things. Apart from all else, those who have had much to do with criminals—whether mugged or unmugged—will tell you that there is such a thing as the "crook eye," which invariably gives its owner away. It is, as I once heard a clever detective put it, "an eye behind the eye"—a something sinister peeping out from the bland and childlike gaze which the "con" turns on his prospective gull.

Robins's eyes were big and blue and clear, and almost infantile in their expression. Nevertheless, as he faced me smiling, I saw the "crook's eye" sizing me up, and I knew that old "Split's" story was more or less true. And, on the impulse of the moment, I began "throwing it into him" in the "patter" of the Under World.

Robins's eyes narrowed for an instant, but that was all. His command of his countenance was simply lovely. And I, as a *connoisseur* of things having to do with gundom, could not but sit and admire. Then he smiled, not quite so nice a smile as those he had been giving me. Mr. Robins realized that the need for professional effort had passed.

"Well," he said, after a meditative pause, "I see that you're *on,* or think you are. And now what?" The laugh with which he finished the sentence was so unmistakably real that I at once became wary.

"I guess you know enough of reporters," I said, rather lamely, "to understand that I'm here to ask whether the complaints in this letter are founded on fact or otherwise."

"Fact in one sense," he replied, cheerily, "but that

won't do this squealer any good, because we're protected on that score, as I'll show you."

He produced one of the agreements that were in force between his concern and its patrons—or "suckers"—and pointed out a "joker" in it which legally, but certainly not morally, rendered invalid the charge of swindling on the part of the letter writer.

"You must have a mighty clever lawyer behind you," I couldn't help saying.

"Yes," replied Robins, complacently, "he knows his business and he's one of us. We have to be prepared for kicks of this sort, because our business breeds 'em. They come our way all the time."

He spoke with cynical frankness.

"I'm going to use that remark of yours in my story," I said.

"See here, cull," he retorted, dropping into the vernacular of the Under World, and wheeling his chair suddenly so as directly to face me, "I don't know who you are outside of your card; but, as I said before, you're *on*, so it seems, and I don't want to treat a good guy like you on the cross. It's no use your wasting my time or me wasting yours in jollying. *But you can't get a line in your newspaper that's going to queer me.* See? And in no other paper in this little burg. Understand? I guess you know all about reporting down to the ground. But there's some sides of the newspaper business that you ain't next to yet. This is one of them. You may as well quit right here as far as I am concerned, for nixy a line of roast goes that you push out about me."

"And *that*, too, goes in my story," I replied, rather hotly.

He smiled indulgently, yawned, and rose. "Come and have lunch with me some day," he said. "You seem a spry boy, and I may throw something in your way."

"I've got stuff for a front-page display," I reported to the city editor half an hour later.

"I—ah—don't think we need it," replied the little man with the tired eyes whom I addressed. "You can put in a bill for your time, but—you needn't write it. Orders from the old man."

I knew that the advertising end of the newspaper had once more been wagging the editorial tail, and that, once again, it had been decided that it was better to protect a rogue rather than lose his half-page "ad." in the Sunday edition, to say nothing of his quarter pages during the balance of the week!

Robins knew whereof he spoke when he assured me that there was "nothing doing" in regard to himself. When I left his office, he simply telephoned his advertising agent, explaining the situation. The latter, in turn, telephoned the business department of the newspaper, and—there you are.

Curiously enough, Robins seemed to take a fancy to me for some reason or other. On more than one occasion he made me an enticing offer to enter his employ as publicity man or press agent. But I couldn't swallow my prejudice against his "plants" in the first place, and I had other and sufficiently lucrative affairs in hand in

the second. Still, we ran into each other at times, and he never failed to jolly me on the score of my failure to show him up.

To return to our meeting on the pier head; after an apparently hearty greeting from him, he asked if I had seen " Peck " Chalmers on board. He explained that Chalmers was to have returned to America on the steamer on which I had crossed, but apparently hadn't.

" Of course," said Robins, " Peck would have come under a monacher [alias], so I wasn't sure if he was on the passenger list or not."

I knew the fellow he spoke of, a quiet, elderly, well-mannered and cleanly shaven man of forty-five or so, who looked like a minister in mufti, but who, in reality, was a clever gambler and " con gun "; one of Robins's own profession.

Robins went on to explain that Peck had gone abroad to see if the " wire-tapping " game or its equivalent could be worked in Great Britain.

" He went broke over—what do you think?—the give-away of an up-State fly-cop with caterpillars in his whiskers and grass-seed in his hair. Think of it—Peck, one of the best men in the business, busted by a bumble-bee, fresh off the dogwood! It happened this way: The State cop [State detective] looked as if he had come to see what was going on at Yard's Town Hall, but he really was a sharp lad who had mixed it up with a lot of good people, as we later found out. Well, Peck's mob picked him up as easy, and he toted them along till they almost hated to take the three thousand that he wrote

home for. To show how much in earnest he was, he let Peck himself mail the letter to the Savings Bank at Gee-haw Corners, ordering the cashier to sent the oof to Peck direct, to be placed on a horse that the innocent was to be tipped off to, day after to-morrow.

"So that day, the jay was allowed to win a hundred and fifty, and had a joyous time of it with the mob. At about midnight, Peck and the whole bunch were pinched, and think how they felt when the country cop threw back his coat and flashed a State detective badge! It cost the mob down to their shirt buttons to get out of the mess."

"How is the wire game in New York?" I queried.

"Never better, pal!" was the instant reply. "Everything is smooth with the Front Office, and the suckers are so thick that we can't attend to 'em."

"We?" I said.

Robins laughed. "I'm saying nothing. I'm a respectable business man with offices—here's my card."

With that we parted.

You can find a moral in all this—and you're welcome to it.

CHAPTER XXVI

HONOR AMONG THIEVES SO CALLED

I HAVE often wondered whence and wherefore that queer—what shall I call it, satisfaction, pride?—which I think a good many of us feel at being on nodding or talking terms with notorious characters. Please remember that I am now speaking as Josiah Flynt, the respectable citizen, and not as Josiah Flynt, the man of the Under World.

My capacity "for to see and to admire," as Mr. Kipling says, was fairly active in the most depressing days of my speckled past. The "seeing and admiring" is the privilege of the spectator who, because he is such, may be near the crowd and not of it. So, in a sense, I stood aloof, my insatiable curiosity often prompting me simply to observe where otherwise I might have freely partaken. This curiosity was one of my few saving graces, although it is only recently that I have become aware of its being so.

But this—may I call it philosophic?—habit of observation, and the making of many incidental and disreputable friendships, is or was, a totally distinct thing from the prideful zest with which John Brown, father, tax-

payer, and pew-renter turns to James Jones, ditto, ditto, and ditto, and says:

"Notice that chap who nodded to me? That's 'Corky Bunch,' who fought and nearly killed Jimmy Upcut out in Colorado last year. He rents his flat from us."

Or it may be that James Jones will say something like this:

"That's 'Billy the Biff' who just said 'morning' to me. You know—leader of the Redfire gang. Said to have killed nine men. But they can't send him to the chair because he does all the thug work round election time for Barney O'Brill, the 'teenth ward boss. Ain't such a bad looker, is he? Swell dresser, too. Buys his shirts at our store." And Jones, who is as law-abiding a citizen as ever lived, turns to his friend a face which is pink with satisfaction.

Again—not long after my last return to New York, I made the acquaintance of a nice old gentleman who is the senior partner of a wholesale stationery concern, father of a fine family, deacon of a Harlem church, member of a citizens' committee, and much more of that sort of thing. Likewise, and for certain reasons which are not important enough to explain, I was introduced to him under another name than my own. He had been to New York's Chinatown once or twice in tow of a professional guide, who, knowing what was expected of him, had filled his patron with amazing stories of the quarter and its residents. The guide had, furthermore, introduced his charge to the fake opium joints, the fan-

tan games and alleged highbinder clubs which are in turn arranged for the reception and the mulcting of visitors. Therefore the old fellow felt fully capable of playing leader himself the next time a collection of country cousins visited town, and I was invited to join the party.

"You needn't hesitate to come along," gurgled the ancient, cheerfully. "When you are with any one that knows Chinatown as well as I do, there isn't a bit of danger, believe me. It's only strangers to the place that are likely to get into trouble."

And this to me!

However, I went, and the large glee with which he pointed out, as hatchet-men and gamblers and lottery keepers and opium-joint proprietors and members of various tongs and of this society and that guild, inoffensive Chinese, who were in reality shopkeepers or laundrymen who had come down to Pell or Mott streets in order to have a night off, was a sight to see. It vouched for the industrious imagination of the professional guide, and when it was all over, and we were on our way uptown again, he beamingly remarked that unless people mixed with all sorts and conditions of folk they—the people—were likely to get very narrow. In other words, you could only round out your life by rubbing shoulders with disreputables.

I have already offered, or rather suggested, one explanation of this social phenomenon, and now another occurs to me. Haven't you, when a youngster, thrust your toes out under the blankets on a winter's morning

for the express purpose of accentuating the comfort of the bed when you drew them back again? I guess you have. And so, I think, respectable people like to emphasize their respectability by bringing it into close, if temporary, contact with its antithesis. A shudderful joy results, no small part of which arises from the conviction that we are not like unto the other men.

Something like that which I have just set down came to me on the second day of my return to New York, while riding downtown on a Sixth Avenue car. It was Monday morning, and three-fourths of the passengers were bargain-hunting women, judging by their conversation. On the rear platform were two "moll-buzzers," or pickpockets, who make a specialty of robbing the fair sex, and sitting near the front door was a stylish, "well-groomed," reserved woman, whom I at once recognized as "Angeles Sal," or Sarah Danby, one of the cleverest women who ever stole a purse. There came to me a thrill of the feeling of which I have been speaking. I felt a pleasant glow of superiority in that I, alone, of all the people in the car, was so well versed in the affairs of the Under World that I knew that some of the dwellers therein were on board. I awaited the things which I felt sure were soon to happen.

They came somewhat more quickly than I had imagined.

At Herald Square the car stopped to let a half dozen of the women alight. Besides the "moll-buzzers," there were two or three other men on the rear platform, which was, in consequence, somewhat crowded. This was pre-

cisely as the pickpockets desired. Scarcely had the last woman gotten into the street when there came a loud shriek from one of them.

She turned, grabbed the hand-rail of the car that by this time had begun to move, and yelling, "I've been robbed!" ran along with it without loosening her grip. Naturally, every remaining passenger jumped to his feet, and I saw "Angeles Sal" press into a group that were clustered at the windows.

Events followed with surprising celerity. The car halted with a jerk, one of the "moll-buzzers"—the "stall," by the way—opened the near platform gate, jumped into the roadway, and disappeared as completely as if the earth had swallowed him. The other seemed to vanish into thin air and simultaneously a police officer appeared at both front and rear doors.

Instinctively my eyes sought Sal. She was in the act of getting out from among the others, and by a single swift movement stood in front of me. Then she made a scarcely audible sound with her lips—something like the ghost of a kiss—and as her right hand passed to the left, apparently for the purpose of opening a hand-bag which was hanging from her left wrist, I felt something drop into the folds of a newspaper which I was carrying in an upright fashion between my hands, its lower edges resting on my knee. The woman had recognized me as of the Under World, had given me the thief's call for help and caution, and had planted her "swag" on me without further parley. Indeed, there wasn't time for talk, only time for action. The

next instant, the excited little woman who had been "touched," burst into the car, accompanied by a third policeman.

"Now, madam," said the detective, brusquely, "is there anybody here whom you think lifted your purse? If so, pick the person out and we will go to the station house." The woman hesitated, glancing from face to face.

"This is infamous," said Sal, in a tone of well-bred anger to a lady who was standing by her side. "We are all of us, so it seems, practically accused of theft." And she moved toward the front door.

"You will excuse me, lady," said the officer on guard, "but you will please stop in the car until this party has said her say out."

Sal flushed indignantly, and drew herself up with magnificent haughtiness. Then she pulled out her cardcase.

"If you don't know me, my good man," she remarked, quietly, "I suppose you have heard of my husband?" And she passed him a pasteboard.

The detective simply wilted as he glanced at the card.

"I beg your pardon, madam," he said. "No offense meant; line of duty, you know, madam." And, mumbling more apologies, he helped her off the car and made way for her through the crowd that had gathered.

Later I learned that Sal had "sized up" the detective as unknown to her. She had the audacity to make it appear—on her cards—that she was the wife of a certain member of the judiciary who was the owner of an international reputation.

It should be added that the cards stood her in good stead on several occasions. But when the shining light of the bench began to get polite notes from department stores in which he was requested to be good enough to ask his wife to be somewhat more discreet in her methods of " obtaining expensive goods, inasmuch as some of our assistants to whom Mrs. —— is not known, may cause her inconvenience," he began to investigate. These communications meant that she had been caught shoplifting and had only squeezed out of the scrapes by her *grande dame* manner and her visiting cards.

In the meantime I had been sitting with Sal's swag " fiddled," or concealed, in my newspaper and expecting a squeal from the " touched " one every instant.

The squeal didn't come off, however. Neither did the excited little woman identify her despoiler. So the police departed and the car went on. I took an early opportunity of disembarking, and in a convenient place examined that which the newspaper contained—I don't mean the news.

Sal's graft proved to be a small gold or gilt purse, which contained a few bills and a couple of valuable rings, which were evidently on their way to a jeweler's for repairs. One was a cluster ring of diamonds and rubies that had had its hoop broken. The other had two big, white stones, set gypsy fashion—it was a man's ring, or rather the stones were so set. But one of the diamonds having loosened had been removed and sewed up in a bit of muslin which, in turn, was secured to the ring itself. The purse evidently belonged to a woman.

Now, you would have thought that the moment that the cry of " thief " was raised, the owner of the rings would have assured herself that the valuables were all right, and would remain so. That thought by the same token would mark you as a denizen of the Over instead of the Under World.

Angeles Sal was not only an expert with her hands, but also a student of human nature. For that matter most " guns " are those whose graft is somewhat out of the ordinary. So, when the " squeal " was put up, she kept a keen eye on the women passengers and saw most of them slap their hands on that part of their persons where their valuables were hidden. The action was involuntary, as it always is in such cases. It told Sal all she wanted to know.

She selected to " touch " a woman who was carrying a suède hand-bag, the fastenings of which were of the dumb-bell order. This woman had, when the outcry was raised, spasmodically touched the lower part of the bag, felt it a moment, and, satisfied, turned her attention to the crowd outside. This was Sal's cue, and it was an easy matter for her to " teaze " the bag open, extract the purse, and re-shut the former. Her knowledge of every-day people's nature had taught her that if the idea of the rings being safe was once fixed in their owner's mind the latter would, in consequence, be safer to " touch " than she would be under ordinary circumstances.

This reminds me that a good many of the successful " getaways " of the Powers that Prey are due to an insight into the workings of the human mentality rather

than to agile fingers or elaborate kits of tools. If you know what the other man is going to do next, he is yours, or rather his belongings are. This is an aphorism that is always in order in the Under World. So it is that " guns " are always studying the art of forecasting. So well are most " plants " arranged, in consequence, that, for the most part, when they fail it is on account of the interposition of the unexpected rather than from any defects in the plan of campaign.

If the foregoing story interests you at all it will probably be on the score of its being an illustration of the so-called " honor among thieves." In other words, you will have come to the conclusion that Sal, thinking that she recognized in me a member of the Under World, threw herself and her " swag " on my presumed " honor," trusting to luck for us to meet again and " divvy " on the usual terms that exist between pal and pal; for, in all cases of a "touch," the parties to it share alike. Now, as a matter of fact, Sal's motive was of an entirely different kind. She knew that she was in a tight place, saw one chance of saving her booty, and took it. That was all that it amounted to, and, from her point of view, she did perfectly right. Newspapers and cheap novels are responsible for a whole lot of romantic humbug in regard to pickpockets and their doings, from the time of Robin Hood down, including the " thieves' honor " proposition.

It is proper for me to add that I advertised the purse and the rings as being " found," and they were, in due time, restored to their owner.

I have often been asked as to whether " honor among thieves " is fact or fiction. The question is not easy to answer. In the first place, honor is a relative term, its interpretation, so it seems to me, depending on place, person and circumstance. Those casuists of the cynical sort who affirm that all human motive is based on selfishness, will hardly except the attribute in question from their generalization.

However open to criticism this same generalization is, so far as it applies to the average citizen, I am certainly inclined to accept it when the crook is concerned. The business of attaching to yourself things that don't belong to you is plainly of a very selfish nature. It has its inception as well as its execution in a desire to get as much possible pleasure with as little possible trouble as may be, and that, too, while ignoring the incidental rights of anybody and everybody.

This statement, as I take it, is a pretty fair definition of selfishness of any and every description. As most motives take color from the acts from which they spring or to which they relate, it follows that the " honor " which we are pleased to think of as existing between rogues, is in reality a something which is prompted by a due regard for the persons or the purses of the self-same individuals. This distinguishes the honor that obtains in the Under World from that which is mostly in evidence in the Over World. In the latter instance the factor of one's good name or character is involved; it is absent in the former. From this characterization you will infer, as I intend you shall, that the " honor " of

the Powers that Prey is but a poor sort of a thing after all, and is, as I have intimated, but personal interest more or less thinly disguised.

Still, sometimes the disguise is so clever that it looks like the real thing—to the outsider; but " wise " people rarely fail in tracing the reasons which prompt a rogue to refuse to give away a pal. Even when his doing so means a long term in prison as against immunity if he would only use his tongue to " peach " on his associate and therefore cause that person's conviction.

In such cases the newspapers, so I've noticed, are apt to give the mum one a species of glorification *which is never deserved.* I want the words set up in italics; they deserve that distinction. Let me repeat, the crook who cannot be got to " flash " on his gang, either by the third degree at the " Front Office "—the often brutal inquisition at police headquarters—the prison chaplain, or the district attorney's staff, is never dumb because his " honor " prompts him to remain so. It is his self-interest that bids him keep his mouth shut.

Some seven years ago, a bank in a little New Jersey town, about fifty miles due west of New York, was one night " done up " in good shape. The " peter-men," of whom there were four, secured something like eighteen thousand dollars in greenbacks, to say nothing of a bunch of negotiable papers and a couple of small jewel safes, weighing about a hundred pounds each. The rich residents of the locality used to store their sunbursts, tiaras and rings in these safes, which, by the way, were kept in the main safe of the bank. This was known to

the gang who turned the trick, and the big safe proving easy, the little ones " fell " in consequence.

The " guns " who were on the job hailed from the West, and had been working together for some years. They were all " good people," as the detective phrase is for clever crooks. There was " Bandy " Schwarz, an old-timer, who had seen the inside of every " stir and jug " west of the Missouri; " Ike " Mindin, otherwise " Beak," an expert with the drills and levers; " Sandy " Hope, a notorious cracksman of Chicago birth and criminal reputation, who, at the time of the New Jersey " plant," was wanted in Kansas City in connection with the shooting of a watchman of a dry goods store; and another man who shall be nameless, so far as I am concerned. I may add, however, that at this writing he is living in New York, and has a fairly prosperous undertaking business (of all things!), having " squared it " for a half dozen or more years. If he should happen to read this, he will know that the small, weazen-faced chap who used to be about a good deal with Pete Dolby's gang in the old days in Chicago, isn't ungrateful. Following the breaking up of Dolby's crowd, through the stool-pigeon, " Dutch Joe," I would many a time have had to " carry the banner," or walk the streets all night if it hadn't been for this man, who was always ready to give up a bed or a cup of coffee.

As I've said before, the " getaway "—that is, the method of escaping with the " swag "—is always carefully worked out by the framers of a " plant," or proposed robbery. In this case it was of a rather elaborate

sort. The safe was to be drilled and jimmied instead of being blown, because of the proximity of houses to the bank. Then the plunder was to be loaded into a buggy, the wheels of which were rubber-tired, while the horses' hoofs were wrapped in cloth to deaden their sound. The buggy was then to be driven to an appointed spot near South Amboy, where a cat-boat in charge of Sandy would be in waiting, to which the articles were to be transferred. Then the craft was to be rowed off to a fishing-ground, where the day was to be spent, and as night fell, was to head for Gravesend Bay, where it was believed that the valuables could be gotten on shore without suspicion, either as fish or as the outfit of a fishing party.

But the unexpected happened. The " getaway " was begun all right, but a couple of miles from the bank the buggy broke down under the weight of the two safes. This was about four-thirty and in June. Now, it so happened that the cashier of the bank was to take his vacation during the following week, and in consequence he was getting to his work ahead of time, and on this particular morning reached the bank at five-thirty o'clock. Fifteen minutes later, the local police and population were scouring the surrounding country, the " Front Offices " of New York, Philadelphia and other big cities were being notified, and a net, so to speak, was drawn tightly around the scene of the " touch " from which there was no escape. It all ended by Bandy and Mindin being caught while trying to " cache " the safes in a wood near to the scene of the breakdown. The third man had

disappeared with the currency. Mindin tried to scare the pursuing Jerseymen by shooting, but got filled with buckshot in consequence.

Bandy absolutely refused to "peach" on his pals. He was bullied, coaxed, threatened, prayed over, offered immunity and in other ways tempted to tell. It turned out afterwards that the cause of all this effort on the part of the police was that somehow or other they had got a hint that Sandy Hope was mixed up with the job, and they wanted him the worst way on account of the Kansas City affair. In other words, they were willing to let a "peter-man" go for the sake of getting a man-killer. Bandy stood it out, though, and was finally sentenced to seven years in prison.

Not long before I last left for Europe, I happened into a prosperous, hybrid sort of store in a pretty town about an hour's ride from New York. It was one of those shops where you can buy nearly everything, from stationery to Japanese ware, with tobacco, candy and dress goods in between. Behind the counter, with a blue apron covering his comfortable paunch and the capital O legs, from which he got his "monacher," was Bandy himself.

Now, the etiquette of the Under World doesn't permit of one pal even recognizing another in the everyday world unless the "office" is given and such a recognition is desired—and safe. Hence, while I knew that Bandy knew me and he knew that I knew it, I gave no sign of that fact. Yet as he passed me the pack of cigarettes for which I had asked, my forefinger tapped the back of

his hand twice, which, in the sign language of the Under World, is equivalent to "I want to chin with you." Bandy coughed a slight, guttural cough and gave a hardly noticeable jerk of his head toward the rear of the store. He had replied that he was willing to "chin" and that the room at the back was all right for that purpose. Whither we went when the other customer in the place had been served and had departed.

I needn't tell about the reminiscences we exchanged. I will come direct to that part of our conversation which had to do with his exhibition of crook "honor" on the lines related.

"You certainly wouldn't 'beef,'" I said tentatively. "Many a man fixed like you were would have let his clapper loose all right. And the newspapers did you proud. 'Twas a fine front you put up, and the gang ought to be proud of you."

"Proud nothing!" said the reformed crook, impatiently. "And seems to me, Cig., that you've caught the patter of those nutty newspaper guys who is always stinging the dear public about guys who never go back on pals, because they're built that way and all the rest of such guff."

He stopped disgustedly.

"Here's the straight of it. Up to the time that we frisked a joint in Chi that happened to be owned by the brother of a cop, we—the four of us—was doing well and had a lot of fall money [large reserve sum for use in case of emergencies]. Well, the gang agreed that if one of us was copped out, the others would look out for

his piece of fall money, and, what was more, while he was put away, he should get a share of one-eighth of all touches, which same could be sent to his wife or kids, as the case might be. That was good enough, wasn't it?"

I nodded and Bandy went on.

"That was the reason why I didn't turn mouthpiece. Another was," he smiled grimly, "that it was quite clearly understood that any one of us who opened his mouth to the police *once,* wouldn't do so *twice.* Sandy Hope, I mind me, was fond of announcing this fact in a kind of casual way. Not that we mistrusted each other, but it was well for everybody to know that the man who tried any stalling off would have his light put out just as soon as it could be arranged."

"But," I said, "supposing that the crowd didn't keep its word—got away with the fall-money and the percentage on the touches while you were in jail?"

"In that case," answered Bandy, without a moment's hesitation, "all bets would be off. The gentleman in custody would make a cry that would be heard in every detective bureau in America. There would be an immediate decrease in the population of crooks. Why, I know enough about Sandy to get his neck——" he stopped suddenly.

"And was this, too, understood by the gang?"

Bandy shifted uneasily on his seat.

"You make me weary—honest you do, Cig. What's the matter with you? You know just as well as I do that every gang of crooks knows just what I've been

telling you. If it weren't true, *what's to keep them from squealing every time they get arrested?*"

In this last sentence Bandy summed up the whole question of honor among thieves, and for this reason I have told the foregoing at some length. The repentance of a thief rarely, if ever, includes restitution. This statement anyhow applies to the veterans. With the younger men it is somewhat otherwise, and then usually through the administrations of the prison chaplain. But after having served a prison term for the first time the young crook adopts the sophistry and cynicism of his elders in crime. The only time that a thief feels regret for his misdeeds is when the latter has been fruitless, or when the proceeds have been lost to him.

What I have said about crooks not peaching on each other does not apply to the professional stool-pigeon, or "mouthpiece," who, by the way, is part and parcel of every police force in every city and town in this country and abroad. But these fellows can hardly be classed as genuine crooks, at least in the great majority of instances. They are rather the Pariahs of the Under World—hated, despised and tolerated for precisely the same reason that curs are allowed to roam through the streets.

It goes without saying that as long as the "mouthpiece" forms an integral part of the police system of civilization, so long will there be a real, although not admitted, alliance between the Powers that Prey and the Powers that Rule, with an incidental weakening and demoralization of the latter.

Finally, there are times and seasons in which the

Under World of its own volition gives up an offender. But these occasions are rare, and only when it is felt that the individual must be sacrificed for the good of the community. Usually there is a political pact in these rare happenings.

JOSIAH FLYNT—AN APPRECIATION

By Alfred Hodder

word that comes from their lips is but a provocative to gain one more word from you; the smile that answers your smile is but a grimace; and their good stories, until they have been published, are locked behind their lips like books in a safe-deposit box. Flynt had no safe-deposit box for his good stories, and no gift for silence; the anecdotes in his books are amazing; the details of just how he got them are still more amazing; he never learned to use up his material, to economize, and he was more amazing than his material.

He invited me the night I met him to go with him on one of his wanderings. A Haroun-al-Rashed adventure

it seemed to me. I closed with the offer at once and asked how I should dress. I had an idea that I must wear a false beard and at least provide myself with a stiletto and a revolver, and be ready to use them. "Why, you will do just as you are," he said. "I shall go just as I am." He did not know it, but he did not tell the truth. He did not change his clothes, but at the first turn into side streets he changed his bearing, the music of his voice, his vocabulary. I could scarce understand one word in five. He was a finished actor; Sir Richard Burton, of course, was his ideal; always in the Under World he passed unsuspected; always from the start of our tramping together he had to explain me. I could never pick up the manner, and indeed was too amused to try; his habit was to explain me in whispers as a dupe, and I had once to rescue him from a fight brought on because he would not consent to sharing with his interlocutor the picking of my pockets. I had more than once to rescue him; he had the height and body of a slim boy of fourteen, but just to see what the beast would do he would have teased my lord the elephant, and he took a drubbing as naturally as any other hardship.

A finished actor, I have written; and an actor knowing to his fingertips many parts. One instance must suffice. I figured usually—I have said it—as a dupe. I was on this night cast for the part of an accomplice, and he for the part of a bold, bad breaker of safes and doors and windows. The character was conceived in an instant. An instant before we were two very tired, very quiet

men, strolling home through the Bowery in a bitter, drizzling rain at three o'clock in the morning.

"Say, mate, what's the chanst for a cup o' coffee?"

The speaker was a fully togged out A. B. for the service of the U. S., and on his cap were the letters *Oregon*. To me the disguise was perfect. He did a bit of the sailor's hornpipe on that slippery, glistening pavement where the rain fell and froze under electric lights.

"The chances are good," said Flynt; and he led the way into a house near by.

The front of the house was as unlighted as respectability demands a house should be at three o'clock in the morning; but there was a dim light at a side door. We went in under the dim light and found music and dancing, and little tables at which we could be served with almost anything except coffee. The "Oregon" took "Whisky straight—Hunter's if you've got it."

"Out at the Philippines?" asked Flynt.

"Sure thing."

"Came round the Cape?"

"Did I? Say, I'll tell you about that."

"Battle of Santiago?"

The sailor was in the midst of the battle of Santiago when Flynt smiled and said quietly:

"Have you seen the Lake Shore push yet?"

To me, at that time, the words were pure enigma, but the color faded out of the sailorman's cheeks, and he dropped back in his chair and said:

"Hell, partner, who are you?"

The rest of the dialogue was swift; I could not follow it; I could only memorize.

"Where did you get those duds?"

"Bought 'em for nine dollars at No.— Bowery."

"What is the lay work?"

"About four per. But the war's played out here; I'm going to shift up State. Where did you get your duds?"

"Just got out."

"Thought your hands looked white. Where did you do your time?"

"Joliet."

"Joliet!—why, I did five years there myself."

And they fell to discussing wardens. Flynt knew the names of the wardens.

"Say, have you got anything on?"

"A little job to-night uptown."

"Can't you put me next?"

"It's my friend's."

This with a nod toward me. The little job uptown was mine. Never having heard before of the little job uptown I declined to put any one next; and we gave the sailorman coin to do a hornpipe for the sitters, and left, presumably, to do the little job. We left in an odor of sanctity, almost of reverence; we were supposed to be accomplished cracksmen, and in high fortune; princes and millionaires of the Under World.

A finished actor—I come back to that—and the streets were his stage, and the first chance word his cue. In a house he was not at home; when he put on the uni-

form he must wear at dinner, he put off his memory, his experience, his wit. His anecdotes, his good stories, lived in his "business suit," and refused to wear a Prince Albert or a Tuxedo even, and waved him farewell at the mere sight of a crush-hat. Make no mistake; the anecdotes were as clean as what he has published; but he was to the end a boy; he was shy; and except on his own stage he was shy to the point of silence or of stammering. He knew books; the books dealing with the Under World he knew rather well; but I fancy he never read them except when he was ill. His book was the men in the street; any man, in any street; policemen, cabby, convict, or men of gentle breeding; him he would read from dawn to dawn very shrewdly and gaily, so long as the tobacco was good; and if the tobacco was not good he would still read. I have given one instance of his getting under a man's guard, of his turning him inside out and inspecting him, not unkindly. It was his habit to get under the guard of everyone he met, to turn them inside out, and inspect them, not unkindly. He talked to any one, every one, who gave him an opening; but the man who got the first hearing was the vagabond. In our strollings we never passed one without a halt, and an interview, and copy. "They are all friends, humbugs," he said philosophically; "I have been one of them myself." But he always gave generously for his means, and though he had begun by censuring me for giving, for giving in ignorance, he expected me always also to give.

Again, one anecdote must serve for many. The scene

was Fifth Avenue, two blocks north of Washington Square. The petitioner was a well-set-up, firm-built Englishman, clean-shaven, aged twenty-five, who said to me:

"I beg your pardon?"

"Yes?" I said and halted.

"It's rather beastly, but I need a drink and I haven't a penny—not a sou."

I said "Diable," and put my hand into my pocket. The man's clothes, accent and bearing presumed so much that if he needed a drink he needed food. At once Flynt intervened. What was said I do not know; the two stepped aside; but presently there was laughter from both Flynt and my beggar; and we three sat at table later, and told tales, and flushed one another's secrets. My beggar was a gentleman ranker out on a spree (it is Kipling of course), damned to all eternity, but his guard once broken he was amusing, and Flynt knew the trick to break his guard.

"Why, after I was dropped from the service, and it came to selling my wife's jewels, I had rather beg than that, and I cannot get work," he said simply. "They say my clothes are too good. What the deuce is the matter with my clothes? But begging is not so bad; I make a good thing of it."

At the moment the point I wish to make is that Flynt knew his vagrant in the open. He had a profound contempt for the books written by frock-coated gentlemen who have academic positions, and say "sociology," and measure the skulls and take the con-

fessions of the vagrant in captivity. Skull for skull he believed there was small difference between that of the first scamp and the first minister of the Gospel. I set that down for what it is worth as his opinion. The confessions of a vagrant in captivity are always, he said, false. This I fancy is almost true.

I had chose a passably dreary seminary course in Harvard in which all the literature of criminology had been got up and reported. I myself had looked into some of the books—too many—some is too many. Five minutes of Flynt's talk turned my books into a heap of rubbish. Five hours' stroll with him made me forget that the rubbish heap existed. At his best, and it was at his best that I knew him, he was what he wished to be—the foremost authority among those who knew him in the side streets.

He had paid for his knowledge—paid with his person. "Old Boston Mary" I believe to be in part fiction; I could never surprise the little man into a confession; but he has lain on the trucks of a Pullman and in the blinding cinders and dust seen his companion lose grip from sheer weariness, and go—to meet Boston Mary. He had tightened his own grip, and been sorry. He could do no more.

JOSIAH FLYNT—AN IMPRESSION

By Emily M. Burbank

IN "My Life," Josiah Flynt says, "I have spoken of Arthur Symons' interest in my first efforts to describe tramp life. I think it was he and the magazine editors who abetted me in my scribblings, rather than the university and its doctrines of 'original research.' . . . His (Symons') books and personal friendship, are both valuable to me, but for very different reasons. I seldom think of Symons the man, when I read his essays and verses, and I only infrequently think of his books, or of him as a literary man at all, when we are together."

Josiah Flynt not only greatly admired Arthur Symons, the distinguished Englishman, as poet, master of prose, and critic, but had an affectionate regard for him, one expression of which was his use of the nickname, "Symonsky." While Flynt's guest in Berlin, Symons had some difficulty in persuading a letter-carrier that a communication from London was for Arthur *Symons, Esq.,* and not for some *Herr Symonsky!* The Slavic twist to the name amused Flynt, who seized upon it. His shy, affectionate nature found an outlet in re-naming close friends.

After one of his visits to London, I asked Flynt if he had seen much of Symons.

" Symonsky put me up, you know," he replied; then with a quick, side glance and a smile, as he lighted a cigarette, " but, to be perfectly frank, when *I* went to bed, *he* was getting up ! "

Here we have defined in a sentence the difference between the two men. Their natures, like their lives, were never parallel; they only just touched one another's imaginations in passing!

Flynt was then studying London's *Under World*—the great city's blackest corners and darkest ways; while Symons, as it chanced, was seldom out of the lime-light circle of London concert halls, preparatory to writing his " London Nights."

Both men were the sons of clergymen, and launched in life's calmest, safest waters, at about the same time, though on opposite sides of the Atlantic. It was their own volition which led them to take to life's high seas. Symons went from his small town to London, which, in spite of continental sojourns, has remained his permanent mooring. Flynt took to the " open " at an early age, and tied up in whatever harbor the storm drove him. American by blood and birth, he felt at home in Russia, Germany, France, or the British Isles, if given the *Mask of No Identity*.

One of the swiftest currents of London life flows down the Strand. There, Josiah Flynt, in what disguise he chose, could do his " work," and, when he would, step over the sill of the old Temple and find a welcome

from his friend, who had chambers in Fountain Court, that silent square of green, which slopes to the Thames, and is kept fresh and cool by its jets of water and great shade trees. Symons lived in the building to the right, after entering the Court, and up a winding flight of old stone steps.

It was in these bachelor quarters of his (he has since married and moved away) that I first saw Symons, the year after Flynt's "Tramping with Tramps" had appeared in the *Century Magazine*. I had been invited, through a mutual friend, for tea, one cool afternoon in June, and we sat on an immense tufted sofa, before the grate, while our host stood, back to the fire, and talked of other people's work.

I can see him now, big, blond and very English, his hands deep in the pockets of his gray tweeds; an old, brown velveteen jacket, faded blue socks and soft tan slippers, harmonizing with his "stage-setting"—well mellowed by time. Books lined the walls, and a spinnet, on which Symons played, when alone, stood in one corner. He had prepared tea and elaborate sweets for us, and then forgot to offer them, so busy was he, talking of his friend, Christina Rossetti, whose poems he had just edited! When he spoke of Olive Schreiner, some one asked him if she was interesting, and I remember quite well Symons' reply: "I stood all one night listening to her talk!"

Even at nineteen, in his "Introduction to the Study of Browning," commended by Robert Browning himself, Symons had proved himself to be an artist, and he is

always lyric. Flynt was never an artist in the same sense, in his literary work—and epic to the end! He knew and understood the ways of men, and had the gift of words; but when he wrote for publication, his imagination seemed chained to earth. It may be that he was too much "on the inside" to get his subject in perspective. Then, too, it must be remembered that Flynt was the tramp writing, not the literary man tramping.

Armed with ancestors of distinction, birth, training, education and the influence of cultured parents, he abhorred all social anchors and obligations. I remember his once saying to me, "My mother has sent me my books from Berlin. Her idea is to anchor me, I think, but I'll leave them boxed for a while, for I'm uncertain about my plans." He was "always a-movin' on!"

Flynt was not a great reader, yet he had a wide knowledge of books—gleaned one scarcely knew when. The child of book-loving parents, he started out in life with a valuable equipment—an innate respect for books and their authors. In every case, however, I think that his chief interest lay in the man, not his literary output. In spite of the sordid realism of his writings, the manner of his last years, and the regretted circumstances of his death, there was a poetic vein, which, like a single, golden thread, ran in and out, the warp and woof of his mind. This betrayed itself in conversations with intimates, and when discussing books of travel or their authors. Especially did Sir Richard Burton and George Borrow fire his imagination. "Lavengro"

and its author were discussed during one of our last conversations.

The "white road" and the sea may have meant something to him as such, but to me he never spoke of either, except as highways; hence I conclude that as such only did they make their appeal to him. Man, not nature, attracted him, and it was always man in the meshes of civilization.

He was a victim to morbid self-consciousness, and this was one reason for his avoiding people of the class in which he was born. Give him a part in a play—he was gifted as an actor—the disguise of a vagabond, or whisky with which to fortify himself, and the man's spirit sprang out of its prison of flesh, like an uncaged bird.

This effect which whisky had upon him, led Flynt to give it as a reason for the "perpetual thirst" of some. He used to say, "Whisky makes it possible for me to approach men with a manner which ignores all class barriers. Pass the whisky and it's man to man—hobo, hod-carrier or king!"

Flynt was a slave to tobacco, which he preferred in the form of cigarettes. One never thinks of him without one, so no wonder he was called "Cigarette" in Trampdom!

His family thought that the too early use of tobacco stunted his growth, for, when seated, the upper part of his body, being broad and strong, suggested a larger man than he proved to be when on his feet. He stood not more than five feet three inches. He was naturally

thin and nervous, with quick movements of the body, and an ever-changing expression of face—a face clean-shaven and rather boyish. None of his photographs give any idea as to his appearance, because the abiding impression received from him was produced by his magnetic personality and individual mannerisms, one of which was a way of dropping his head forward and looking up through frowning eyebrows. He decorated his speech with Russian, French or German words, thrown into a sentence haphazard, and spoke in a voice pitched low and used rhythmically. He had an impressionable, volatile nature, and seemed really to become one of the race which at the moment filled his mental vision.

Flynt's ethical code was that of the Under World, and, in some respects, superior to the one in use on the Surface of Life.

A prominent sociologist said recently, " Flynt had the field to himself; there is no one to take his place at present. Few men who live and know the life of the Under World, as he did, have his mental equipment. Many can retain the facts, but are unable to handle them as satisfactorily; then, too, to be friend and companion of tramps and criminals, and of men like Tolstoy and Ibsen, is to possess a wide range of octaves in human experience and mental grasp! "

Flynt's talent for languages enabled him to pick up the vernacular, even of underground Russia, in an incredibly short time.

As he says himself, *Wanderlust,* not the scientist's

curiosity to verify theories, led him on to his well-merited distinction as criminologist, and down to his ultimate undoing, at the early age of thirty-eight.

"Beyond the East the sunrise,
Beyond the West the sea,
And the East and West the *Wanderlust*
That will not let me be."

While Flynt had most of the appetites, good and bad, possible to man, he was not a weak man, but a physically selfish one, strong in his determination to "enjoy." Condemned to an early death by the excessive use of stimulants, he agreed to write his "Life," did so, and then shut himself in his room in Chicago, to pass out—unafraid, unaccompanied, uncontrolled—a characteristic ending!

That Josiah Flynt has started on his long journey, that this world will see him no more, is impossible for his near friends to realize, so accustomed are they to his periodical disappearances and his unfailing return to their midst.

He who preferred the byways, the crooked winding paths, has at last struck the broad, straight road where there is no turning back. It is he who must wait for us now, as we push on, with his cheerful "Good luck! Be good! Don't forget me!" ringing in our ears, and in our hearts Stevenson's words:

"He is not dead, this friend, not dead,
But in the path we mortals tread,
Got some few trifling steps ahead,
And nearer to the end,

So that you, too, once past the bend,
Shall meet again, as, face to face, this friend
You fancy dead. . . . . .

"Push gaily on, strong heart! The while
You travel forward, mile by mile,
Till you can overtake,
He strains his eyes to search his wake,
Or, whistling as he sees you through the break,
Waits on the stile."

(R. L. S.)

Flynt often talked of his death after disease fastened upon him, but always with an inconsequence as to what lay beyond the grave—not bravado, but the philosopher's acquiescence to the inevitable, whatever it be. He had great faith in the loyalty of friends who might survive him. "So-and-so will speak a good word for me, I know!" he would say. Separation, by geographical distances, never bothered him, yet he wrote but few letters. He seemed to get satisfaction out of his belief that he and his nearest friends communicated by thought transference: "The wires are always up!" Doubtless he passed out with the conviction that this would continue.

The man's spirit remained childlike in its tender, confiding quality, and pure, in spite of the fact that he dragged his poor body through the mire of life.

His generous nature and faithful friendship have set in motion currents which are eternal.

A FINAL WORD *

By Bannister Merwin

TO complete the story of Josiah Flynt's life is not an easy task. His later years were lived in the open, it is true, and the details of his movements were, in every case, known to at least one of his friends; but his own love of mystery and the delight that he found in mystifying others led him to conceal from one friend what he freely told to the next.

If all his friends could come together and compare notes, the result might be a consecutive account of what he did during those years. But alas! some of them are dead. Alfred Hodder, who knew more than most of us, died only a few weeks after Josiah.

*Note by the Publishers.—It was Josiah Flynt's intention to add to his autobiography some concluding chapters of a philosophic and sociological nature. Among other subjects, he intended to prove that there is no such thing as honor among thieves, and to show conclusively that there is no real happiness in unlawful existence.

The call to the road which goes, but does not return, came to him, however, in January, 1907, when his life came abruptly to an end.

To Mr. Bannister Merwin, his relative and friend, we are indebted for the following account of Flynt's movements during the last few years of his life.

" My Life," however, makes little pretense of being a complete biography in the accepted sense. Rather it is the disjointed record of those incidents which in their combined impression brought him most nearly to the understanding of himself. The mere facts of life did not seem very important to him; feeling was everything. And few men who have set out to write their own stories have been able to show themselves as truly as he has shown himself. That is because he was essentially a man of feeling—sensitive, proud, filled with sentiment—though only his close friends may have known this of him.

When he had nearly completed his " confession," as he liked to call it, he said to me one day: " I have given them my insides." He did indeed make the strongest kind of an effort to let the world see him as he honestly saw himself—and I think he saw himself more honestly than most men do, for he was free from self-exaltation. Always he was humble about his own limitations.

If anything is to be added to what he has written about himself, it should comprise those experiences which he would have been most likely to relate, had he lived to write more. And first, doubtless, he would have told something of his work in investigating " graft " in several of our larger cities. As far as I can find, he was responsible for the introduction of the word "graft" into book English. It was a word of the Under World, and he lifted it to the upper light. The articles in *McClure's Magazine,* in which he exposed

police corruption, were also, if I am not mistaken, the first important examples of modern "muck-raking." They are still obtainable in printed form, and Josiah probably would have said little about them in his book. But he certainly would have related with relish the week's wonder of his escape from the New York police. When the article about "graft" in New York was published, the "Powers That Be" in the metropolis were loud in their denunciation of Josiah Flynt. They swore roundly that they would make it hot for him when they caught him, and the daily press announced that he was to be arrested and compelled to make good his statements. But Josiah Flynt had disappeared. The police did not find him, and it was some time before he came back to his old haunts.

There was reason to think that the police were only "bluffing." There was also reason to think that Josiah would be able to "make good," if he were captured and examined by a police tribunal. Nevertheless he hid himself in obscure lodgings in Hoboken. An escaped criminal would not cover his tracks more carefully. The truth was that the opportunity for mystification appealed to him irresistibly. He exaggerated the necessity for concealment in order that he might enjoy to the full the sensation of being vainly hunted. For, as I have said, he always loved to make mystery. I have seen him, during a quite harmless expedition along a New York street by night, take elaborate precautions to avoid approaching strangers, on the assumption that they were "hold-up" men. Such avoidance of hypo-

thetical dangers was to him a most fascinating game—a game which he was well qualified to play.

He found a melancholy and sentimental pleasure, too, in keeping himself in the background at times when such inaction was contrary to his happier desires. I remember that, in 1887, during the time when he was living in the Under World, after his escape from the reform school and before his appearance at his mother's home in Berlin, he made one brief and characteristic emergence which may throw light upon this trait in him. Josiah was my cousin. At that time the home of my family was in Detroit, Michigan, and one day Josiah put in an appearance at my father's office. He was ragged and unkempt, and uncertain in his account of himself. By his own story he was a detective engaged in an important case, and he asked for money enough to get him to some near city. My father tried to persuade him to go home with him to the house. The little vagabond refused, but he added: "I found out where you lived and went up and looked at the house, and I stood and watched the boys [my brother and myself] playing ball in the next lot." He had remained at the edge of the lot for some time, taking strange and wistful pleasure in his own forlornness.

Reference has been made by others to the fact that there was one romantic passion in Josiah's life. For years he worshiped from afar a girl who possessed grace, intelligence, and beauty, though so far as his friends know he never offered himself to her. In July, 1894, I was with him for a few days at his home in

Berlin. He told me at that time that the girl he loved was on the continent, spending the summer at a mountain resort. He had come to the conclusion, he said, that it was time for him to go to her and declare himself. Accordingly, he did make a pilgrimage of many hundred miles to the place where she was staying, dreaming we may not guess what dreams along the way. It was many months before I saw him again. When he began to speak of the girl in the same old terms of distant adoration, I asked him about his journey of the preceding summer. "Well," he said, "I went there, and I saw her, but I didn't speak to her." "Did she see you?" I asked. "No," he answered. Again he had been the watcher by the wayside standing in shy self-effacement while the girl of his heart passed by.

A few years before his death Josiah, in what was undoubtedly an honest and serious determination to improve his health and his habits, went to Woodland Valley, in the Southern Catskills, and there had built for him a comfortable little "shack," on the grounds of a beautifully situated summer hotel. Different friends were with him during the time he spent in the mountains, but every now and again the call of the city became too strong for him to resist. While he was living at the "shack" he made a few of the conventional trips to the summits of near-by mountains, but his interest was usually centered in simply "getting to the top." The goal once reached he would enjoy for a few moments the pleasant sense of obstacles overcome, and

then, after a casual glance at the "view," he would say: "Well, now let's go back." His real life at Woodland was his interest in the natives of the valley. He worked himself into close acquaintance with them, and sought to understand their point of view. Even after he had given up his shack, he still held to the valley as his place of refuge. He bought a little tract of land there and, to the time of his death, talked of building upon it a snug but permanent home.

Mr. Charles E. Burr, to whom Josiah so often refers in his narrative, supplies the story of an interesting period. I will quote him. "In the summer of 1904," he says, "I had some correspondence with Flynt, who was then in Berlin. The tone of his letters made me think that a few months in the Indian Territory, where rigid prohibition laws are enforced, would benefit him. I therefore offered him a position as car-trailer on the Southwest Division of the Saint Louis and San Francisco Railroad, with headquarters at Sapulpa, Indian Territory. The offer was accepted, and Flynt came to Sapulpa about the middle of August, by way of Galveston, Texas.

"The duties assigned to him kept him on the road much of the time. Whenever the opportunity came, I saw to it that he made the acquaintance of interesting characters who lived in the Territory and in Oklahoma. Among them were several United States deputy marshals who were known as 'killers,' and he afterwards told me that he had got from these men a fairly complete account of the 'Apache Kid' and his numerous

gun-fights. I once sent Flynt to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to interview the famous Apache, Geronimo, but the old chief was in a bad humor and would not talk.

" During September horses were stolen from a car at Okmulgee, Indian Territory, and Flynt and two United States marshals went with me in pursuit of the thieves.

" The trail led us into the heavily timbered Arkansas bottoms, long the home of the outlaws and ' cattle rustlers ' of the Territory. At the end of a continuous forty-mile ride we found some of the stock, and Flynt, who was not accustomed to sitting a horse, then declared that he would rather die on the prairie than ride that broncho any farther. He drove back to Okmulgee with a rancher whom I employed to take the recovered horses.

" Later, Flynt became more accustomed to a saddle, and rode to many points of interest near Sapulpa. He once told me that he had made several trips to the home of a half-breed negro who lived near a ledge of rocks called ' Moccasin Tracks,' about five miles from Sapulpa. This half-breed had a bad record. The United States marshals had him ' marked,' and planned to ' get him ' at the first opportunity, but Flynt said that he was a very interesting man to talk with.

" I left Sapulpa in October, and Flynt accompanied me to Chicago, where he remained until March. He was very proud of the certificate which was issued to him when he severed his connection with the Saint Louis and San Francisco.

" These certificates are commonly called ' Letters of Identification.' Flynt always referred to his as his ' Denty,' and he took much pleasure in showing it to his friends. He gave it to me a few days before his death and asked me to keep it for him."

From this " Denty " we get a rough description of Josiah Flynt as he was in 1904. " Age, thirty-five years. Weight, one hundred and twenty-five pounds. Height, five feet five inches. Complexion, light. Hair, light. Eyes, brown." It also gives as his " Reasons for leaving the service ": " Resigned. Services and conduct entirely satisfactory."

In the autumn of 1905 the insurrectionary outbreaks in Russia were assuming such proportions that a serious revolutionary war was not improbable. Josiah secured a commission from a magazine to go to Russia and investigate the situation. His health was by no means good, and his temperate life in Oklahoma had had no permanently good effect upon his habits, but he set forth eagerly to do his work. He gathered much interesting material, and he wrote the required articles. He became very ill, however, and for a long time he lay at the point of death in a German hospital. When he returned to America for the last time, in the first warm days of 1906, he was broken, changed in his looks, a feeble shadow of himself. He told me then that, while he was so near death in Germany, the two thoughts that did more than anything else to get him on his feet again were his desire to see his mother and his determination to " make good " with his articles, which were

not completed until his partial convalescence had begun. I had helped to get him that Russian commission, and it seemed to be ever in his mind that, since I had "stood for him"—that was the way he put it—he must not fail. From his bed of pain he dragged himself to "make good." Loyalty such as that was one of his strongest traits. I remember that once, while he was living in the Catskills, a distant relative sent a request for some money to help him out of a difficulty. Josiah came to New York by the first train he could get, and went to one of the savings banks in which he kept his funds. The relative received the money he needed. Before returning to Woodland Josiah told me of the errand which had brought him to New York. He added: "We must always stand by the family."

It was late in 1906 that Flynt began his last task. He was sent to Chicago by the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* to "write up" pool-room gambling. Unable to give to this work the old energy of investigation, he was helped to a creditable showing by people who had the information he desired. He must have known that he was near the end. In every letter that he wrote to me during those last weeks he referred again and again to his having seen "mother," or his expectation of spending the next day with "mother," or of his plan to "make a short trip with mother." All his love centered more and more closely in her as death approached him, though, indeed, for years his chief thoughts had been of her. She was spending those last weeks in a suburb of Chicago, and he especially welcomed the work

that took him to Chicago, because it made it possible for him to see her often.

But when, about mid-January, 1907, he came down with pneumonia, he would not let his friends admit her to his room in the Chicago hotel. She was not to witness his suffering. He died at 7 P.M., on January 20, after two hours of unconsciousness.

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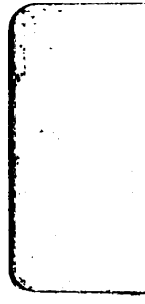
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